

Healthy Families Act of 2023

Testimonials & Statements of Support

More than 110 organizations endorsed the Healthy Families Act of 2023, introduced by Senate HELP Chairman Bernie Sanders and Representative Rosa DeLauro along with colleagues in the U.S. House and Senate.

See below some testimonials and statements of support for the legislation:

Mike Baldwin, President of the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen, said: “The BRS would like to thank those members of Congress who support paid sick leave. Rail workers were deemed essential during the Pandemic. They came to work sick because they didn’t want to miss a day’s pay, or worse be disciplined for their absence. This legislation is important to rail workers. It is an essential need, and it isn't just a frivolous want.”

Rachel Shelton, a MomsRising member from Asheville, North Carolina, said: “When I had my first child, I was a public school teacher, and I had to drain all my sick time to try to maintain some income during my unpaid maternity leave. That was a huge challenge, because babies get sick! When I had my second, I made the tough decision to leave my job because the situation was unsustainable. It shouldn't be this hard to balance caregiving and work. We need Congress to pass the FAMILY Act and Healthy Families Act, now. It's past time we guarantee all working people the paid leave and paid sick days we need to care for our families and for ourselves.”

Josephine Kalipeni, Executive Director of Family Values at Work, said: “Family Values at Work (FV@W) would like to express our gratitude to Representative DeLauro, Senator Gillibrand, and Senator Sanders for their unwavering commitment to enhancing the FAMILY Act and the Healthy Families Act (HFA). These bills will provide much-needed relief and support to workers across the nation who are struggling to balance work and caregiving responsibilities. The passage of this legislation will mean that families will no longer have to fear losing their jobs while caring for their loved ones. As the leading national Network of state partners advocating for paid leave and paid sick leave for over two decades, FV@W is thrilled to see this federal legislation mirror the learnings of what our state advocates know works for workers and families.”

Dawn Huckelbridge, Director of Paid Leave for All, said: “Paid leave is a powerful tool for public health, economic growth, and equity. And thanks to our champions in Congress and a growing movement, we came closer than ever to finally passing paid family and medical leave in the United States. That demand and momentum isn't slowing. Paid Leave for All and our partners look forward to finishing the job and ensuring every working person has the dignity and security of paid leave.”

Jocelyn Frye, President of the National Partnership for Women & Families, said: “We are elated to join Rep. DeLauro, Sen. Gillibrand and Sen. Sanders for the reintroduction of the FAMILY Act and Healthy Families Act – they’ve been tireless partners in the fight for paid family and medical leave, and paid sick leave legislation. Our country is one of the remaining few that don’t have national paid leave or sick time policies, and it’s time to

provide a national standard for these basic rights for families. It's urgent that Congress act to make these bills law."

Jean Ross, RN and President of National Nurses United, said: "Nurses want what is best for patients, and that's why our union supports paid sick and family leave for all workers. Nurses see the negative health consequences on patients when they are unable to take leave due to their own illness, or the need to care for family. Nobody should have to choose between their own health or the health of their loved ones, and their livelihood. Further, nursing is a majority female profession, and paid sick and family leave is essential to ensuring that nursing becomes a sustainable profession. NNU is proud to support the paid leave bills sponsored by Senator Sanders, Senator Gillibrand, and Congresswoman DeLauro."

A Better Balance Co-Founder & Co-President Sherry Leiwant said: "No worker should be forced to choose between caring for their personal health or for a loved one, and their economic security. But as we see every day through our free work-family legal helpline, millions of workers are being denied what should be a basic, fundamental workplace right. We thank Chairman Sanders, Senator Gillibrand, and Ranking Member DeLauro for reintroducing the Healthy Families Act and the FAMILY Act. These should be priority pieces of legislation this session for all elected leaders."

Crystal Phillips, A Better Balance member, said: "I was fortunate enough to have access to emergency paid sick time, which was a lifeline for me when I experienced COVID symptoms and needed time to quarantine, but now that those protections have expired, I'm back to having no access to paid sick days. I'm a Community Advocate from Kentucky with A Better Balance, and I speak out about my experience so that hopefully, nobody is put in a position of having to weigh their health needs against keeping their job. We need to make paid sick leave and paid family and medical leave a guaranteed right for workers across the country and pass the Healthy Families Act and FAMILY Act. Thank you to Senator Sanders, Senator Gillibrand, and Rep. DeLauro for championing these bills to support all working families."