

February 11, 2019

The Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Gillibrand and Congresswoman DeLauro:

I am writing on behalf of First Focus Campaign for Children, bipartisan children's advocacy organization dedicated to making children and families the priority in federal budget and policy decisions, to thank you for your leadership in reintroducing the Family and Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act.

As an organization committing to securing the economic security of America's families, we applaud your efforts to create a comprehensive national paid leave program in the United States.

The lack of earned family leave for millions of workers in the U.S. leaves parents with the impossible choice between staying home to care for and bond with their newborn and losing necessary income. The United States is the only OECD (Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development) country that does not provide paid maternity leave nationwide. More than half of the nations in the OECD provide paternity leave to fathers, and paid leave is given to both parents in 23 OECD countries.

The Center for American Progress estimates that working families lose around \$20.6 billion in wages annually due to a lack of paid family and medical leave. The FAMILY Act would provide working parents with the economic security needed to provide for and raise healthy, happy children.

Paid family leave promotes healthy child development and promotes family economic security. It gives parents a chance to adequately care for their newborns or children with special health care needs. For example, men are more involved with their child's direct care when they are able to take off two or more weeks after the birth of their child and women are available to breastfeed their newborn.

Access to paid family leave has significant positive health implications for children and families by allowing parents to care for their children. For example, men are more involved with their child's direct care when they are able to take off two or more weeks after the birth of their child and mothers are available to breastfeed their newborn.

We are grateful for your leadership in making children and families a legislative priority, and we look forward to working with you on this and other proposals to improve the well-being of children and youth.

Sincerely,



Bruce Lesley
President