



Paid Family Leave

WHEREAS, At some point in their careers, most workers are forced to navigate the conflicting demands of work and family. This struggle to meet their obligations is most acute at the birth or adoption of a child or when a child, spouse, partner or parent has a serious illness; and

WHEREAS, The ability to continue working and the need for spouses to share in parenting and family duties should not be undercut by policies based on a dated model of one/male breadwinner per family; and

WHEREAS, Research has shown that access to paid leave policies can help reduce gender and economic disparities, increase worker productivity, strengthen regional economies and improve critical health outcomes and the health of babies; and

WHEREAS, The Federal Family Medical and Leave Act (FMLA) only provides for unpaid leave, which many working people cannot afford to use. Most workers must rely on their employers for any paid leave; and

WHEREAS, There is overwhelming support for paid family leave policies. While 84 percent of Americans are in favor of paid family leave, only 13 percent of private sector workers have paid family leave benefits. Six states — California, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Washington, and the District of Columbia — as well as numerous local governments have paid family leave laws on the books. Paid family leave has also been won at the bargaining table and even through corporate shareholder activism; and

WHEREAS, The cost of providing paid leave is modest if funded through an insurance mechanism specifically designed for family leave as outlined in the FMLA.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The UWUA believes that working families should not have to choose between earning a paycheck and caring for their families; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The UWUA supports passage of the Family And Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act (H.R. 1185/S. 463) to establish a comprehensive national program that helps meet the needs of new parents and for people with serious personal or family health issues through the creation of a shared fund that makes paid leave affordable for employers of all sizes and for workers and their families; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, UWUA affiliates are encouraged to advocate for the creation of state and local paid leave laws and for improving existing paid leave laws to include strong job protections, including 100 percent wage replacement for low-income workers. Additionally, affiliates are urged to bargain with employers for paid family leave benefits for union members; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, The UWUA calls on companies to adopt model paid leave policies. These policies should apply equally to all employees (salaried, hourly, full-time, part-time, and sub-contractors) and to all parents (birthing mothers as well as fathers, adoptive, foster, those who become parents via surrogacy and all other parents). Ideal family caregiving policies should include provisions for LGBTQ and other non-traditional families.