FAMILY Act

Background:

- Senator Kristen Gillibrand (D-NY) and Representative Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn) introduced S. 1714 and H.R. 3481— the Family and Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act—to their respective chambers on May 18, 2023.
- As of August 2024, the bill has been referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means and the Senate Committee on Finance.
- The current FAMILY Act is the latest version of a paid family and medical leave proposal the members have sponsored and advocated for since 2013.

Talking Points:

- The majority of the American workforce does not have access to paid employment leave. Only 43% of workers have personal medical leave, and a mere 27% have paid family leave. This lack of access causes working families to lose an estimated $22.6 billion in wages each year.
- Women, who are more likely to be family caregivers, are particularly impacted by the absence of paid leave. New mothers who do not receive paid leave are less likely to report wage increases and more likely to leave the workforce altogether. Older women who leave the workforce to care for a parent average higher losses in income and retirement than men.
- Paid leave benefits businesses and strengthens the economy. Paid leave saves costs for employers by decreasing turnover and increasing employee engagement. National paid family leave could add $775 billion to the US GDP by increasing women's participation in the workforce. Analyses of existing state-based paid leave programs show benefits to both employers and employees.

Provisions in the Bill:

The Family and Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act is comprehensive federal legislation that would make paid leave accessible for working families and affordable for employers, including by:

- Providing all workers with up to 12 weeks of partial income when they take leave to tend to their own serious health conditions (including pregnancy and childbirth recovery) or those of a family member. Leave to address the effects of gender-based violence or to make arrangements related to the military deployment of an immediate family member would also be covered.
- Protecting workers from retaliation, including by guaranteeing that workers who have been at their job for more than 90 days have the right to be reinstated after leave.
- Creating a shared paid leave fund through small employee and employer payroll contributions of two cents per $10 in wages. Contributions would cover both paid leave

insurance benefits and administration costs for a new federal Office of Paid Family and Medical Leave.
- Covering workers in all companies, regardless of size. Part-time, lower-wage, and self-employed workers would all be eligible for benefits.

The FAMILY Act is critical legislation to support a thriving economy and the ability of workers to effectively balance the needs of work and family.

The Healthy Families Act

<u>Background:</u>

- Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and Representative Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn) reintroduced the Healthy Families Act to their respective chambers as S. 1664 and H.R. 3409 on May 17, 2023.
- As of August 2024, in the Senate, the bill has been placed on the Legislative Calendar after being referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. In the House, the bill has been referred to the Committees on Education and the Workforce, House Administration, and Oversight and Accountability.

<u>Talking Points:</u>

- Too many American workers are forced to choose between health and income. Federal law does not currently guarantee the right to paid time off for short term illness, and nearly one in four private sector employees have no paid sick days with which to take care of themselves or their children or other family members.
- Lower-wage workers particularly struggle to access paid sick time. This has a notable impact on communities of color, immigrants, and LGBTQ+ workers, as these populations are overrepresented in low-wage jobs.
- Paid sick day policies at the state and local level have been demonstrated to work well, without negative business or economic impacts.
- Paid sick leave is a public health issue. Workers without paid leave are much more likely to go to work sick and send their sick children to school, exposing others to potential illness. Workers without paid leave are three times as likely to forego or delay necessary medical care for themselves, and twice as likely to forego such care for their families.

<u>Provisions in the Bill:</u>

The Healthy Families Act is federal legislation that would dramatically expand access to paid sick time for working Americans. The bill would:

- Allow workers at businesses with 15 or more employees to earn up to seven job-protected paid sick days a year to take care of themselves or their families. At businesses with fewer than 15 employees, workers would earn up to seven *unpaid* sick days a year.
- Permit workers who are survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence, or stalking to use paid sick time to recover and seek related assistance.
- Establish a straightforward calculation for sick time accrual.
- Authorize employers to require certification if an employee uses more than three paid sick days in a row, and to continue to use existing policies so long as they satisfy bill requirements.

The Healthy Families Act is necessary legislation to protect the health and financial security of working Americans and their families by establishing paid sick leave standards nationwide.