

# ARIZONA FAMILIES NEED PAID FAMILY LEAVE

Right now only 17% of working people in the United States have access to paid family leave through their employer. [1] And although the current Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) allows some employees to take up to 12 weeks of job-protected unpaid leave, it only covers about 60 percent of employees. Further, many people who are eligible to take FMLA can't afford to take it, because FMLA's unpaid. This lack of paid, job-protected leave is why 1 in 4 new mothers is back at work within 10 days of having a baby [2] and also why 1 in 5 retirees leaves the workforce earlier than planned because they need time away from work to care for a spouse or loved one. [3]

**Working families need and deserve a robust detail-driven paid family and medical leave policy.** We need a plan that is accessible to all working people, inclusive when it comes defining family, affordable and cost-effective and sustainable for workers, employers, and taxpayers and provides a meaningful length of leave. **\*Please read the following stories from Arizona and take them to heart. Our families are counting on you.**

## *Sabrina, Tucson*

When my second child was born, I was a single parent working a minimum-wage job. Thankfully, I had support from my extended family, but even so, I had to return to work when my son was only a little over a month old. My stress level impacted my ability to produce enough milk, and I had to supplement his diet with formula, which resulted in digestive troubles and health issues that have become long-term problems for him. My only regret from that time in my life is that I was unable to stay home with him and give him the healthy start that he needed. It is important to remember that the first year of a child's life forms the foundation for the rest of their growth and development. When we

discuss family leave for new parents, we are also talking about giving children the best possible start in life. Giving parents time and resources during the first months of their child's life can also prevent all sorts of long-term health issues that put a financial burden on the health-care system.

## *Anthony, Superior*

To make ends meet I was working three jobs seven days a week living paycheck to paycheck. I fell ill. I was sick for maybe six weeks, it took me a month to feel somewhat recovered. In all this time I could not afford to take time off work. I could not afford to see a doctor. I had to suffer greatly through this. Being sick for so long while working three jobs affected me so badly that now I am only working one job part time and struggling mightily. Financially it is extremely difficult to meet my most basic needs. If only employers recognized that people become ill (or a family member has become ill) and needs extra time to fully recover, without fear of losing their job. And, being paid through unforeseen crisis. Unfortunately, this is not the case.

## *Eivor, Rio Rico*

I am Swedish but had my kids in the US, so did not experience the very good system they have for maternity and sick leave. Not to forget about medical and prescription systems. Still have many younger relatives over there that had kids (and get sick!) and it is amazing what they experience. Paid family leave makes for a stronger family, less stress and healthier kids. Hence a better future economy for the country, for the people who care more about money then helping others!



**Working families in the United States  
LOSE AT LEAST \$20.6 BILLION  
IN WAGES EVERY YEAR  
due to a lack of access to  
paid family and medical leave**

Source: Sarah Jane Glynn and Danielle Corley, "The Cost of Work-Family Policy Inaction: Quantifying the Costs Families Currently Face as a Result of Lacking U.S. Work-Family Policies" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2016), available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/women/reports/2016/09/22/143877/the-cost-of-inaction/>.)

**Join the conversation on Twitter: @MomsRising would love to hear your hopes and plan for #Paid-FamilyLeave. For more stories from your state visit [www.MomsRising.org](http://www.MomsRising.org)**

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[1] <http://www.nationalpartnership.org/our-work/workplace/paid-leave.html> [2] *In These Times: The Real War on Families*  
[3] *Keeping Up with the Times: Supporting Family Caregivers with Workplace Leave Policies*, AARP Public Policy Institute