



International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers

IAM Supports the Federal Employees Paid Parental Leave Act (H.R. 1022)

Position: The U.S. federal government, unlike many other countries, and large private employers, does not provide paid parental leave to its employees. Employees must save accrued annual and sick leave to receive paid time off. While the current practice works for the lucky few who never get sick or take a vacation, it is unrealistic for most. The Federal Employees Paid Parental Leave Act of 2017 (H.R. 1022) will promote the values of parenthood and family by providing six weeks of paid leave to federal employees who adopt, foster or have a child. IAM strongly *supports* the Federal Employees Paid Parental Leave Act of 2017.

Most federal workers are eligible for 12 weeks of unpaid leave under the Family Medical Leave Act. However, if an employee wants to receive pay for any portion of their parental leave they must use accrued vacation time or sick days, a difficult task for those who are newly employed or have experienced any health problems in the past. This outdated policy does not promote a family-friendly environment and stands in stark contrast with the rest of the industrialized world, and it follows a growing trend in the U.S. private sector to offer similar leave allowances.

The United States is one of the only industrialized nations in the world that does not offer paid parental leave to all workers. Most countries recognize how important it is for mothers to recover from childbirth and for parents to nurture their children during their most important developmental stages. As the federal government often sets the bar for employee benefits, passage of this bill could inspire other sectors of government and private corporations to offer paid parental leave and bring our country closer to the global standard of paid parental leave.

Offering paid leave will also improve recruitment and retention for federal employees and make federal agencies more competitive among other top tier U.S. firms. In the coming years, recruitment and retention will be increasingly important as the number of retirements increases at an unprecedented rate. While the federal government cannot compete with private-sector salaries, the Federal Employees Paid Parental Leave Act of 2017 will help put the federal government on an equal playing field when it comes to being a family-friendly employer.

IAM strongly supports the Federal Employees Paid Parental Leave Act of 2017, H.R. 1022, legislation that will provide six weeks of paid leave to federal employees who adopt, foster or have a child. This would ease the burden for parents who are too often forced to choose between their paycheck and their child.