



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Indiana Coalition Members Applaud Reintroduction of Federal FAMILY Act, Call for Action

Indianapolis, IN – Today, over 200 lawmakers are introducing the federal FAMILY Act in Congress, which would create a program to provide 12 weeks of paid family and medical leave to working people across the nation. At a time when paid parental leave is available [to state employees](#) but [not a majority of working Hoosiers](#), when Indiana ranks 39th in family caregiver supports even as the need for caregiving increases, and when [nearly one in four 20-year-olds](#) starting out in the workforce today will eventually face a significant disabling condition prior to retirement, members of Indiana's [Time Matters Coalition](#) are calling for action on paid leave.

The following members offered statements in response to today's reintroduction:

"In Indiana, where maternal and infant mortality rates are among the highest in the nation, too many mothers are forced to return to work just two weeks after giving birth to make ends meet," said Paige Wilkins, CEO of Healthier Moms and Babies. "Paid leave gives families the time to heal, adjust, and bond—research shows it reduces hospitalizations, improves maternal mental health, lowers infant mortality, and even strengthens father involvement, family stability, and parent-child relationships."

"When a person doesn't have to decide which way to care for their family is most important, paying bills or being present, there is so much less stress," said Jeanelle Artherhults, Time Matters Indiana Coalition member from Grant County. "Removing this stress not only helps make that family healthier; but it also makes for a healthier, more productive community. Investing in people through paid family leave can reduce violence and increase job security while protecting children and the elderly."

"At the Indiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence, we know that economic support for families through programs like the FAMILY Act prevent multiple forms of violence, including domestic violence and ACEs (or child abuse)," said Laura Berry, Executive Director of the Indiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

Sherry Watkins, AAUW Indiana Co-President, shared, "AAUW Indiana strongly supports the Family Act as we work towards availability of and access to a high standard of benefits and policies that promote work-life balance. The Family Act will provide individuals and families with enhanced financial security, provide employers with a healthier, more valued workforce, and can provide our nation with improved public health and a stronger economy. We urge its passage."

"Employees are at their best when they can prioritize their health and the health of their loved ones. These policymakers understand the benefit to businesses when we enact policies that allow workers to achieve work-life balance. I hope that this will lead to a nationwide policy that will afford all Hoosier families the right to prioritize their health," said Ashley Phillips, Community Needs Analyst at the Indiana Community Action Poverty Institute.

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About the Time Matters Indiana Coalition

The Time Matters Indiana Coalition is a group of advocates, organizations, and stakeholders who believe in the common mission of implementing a paid family and medical leave policy in Indiana. Individual or organizational members who are interested in joining this coalition can email institute@incap.org with a brief statement of interest or submit a [request to join our Google group listserv](#).

About the Indiana Community Action Poverty Institute

The Indiana Community Action Poverty Institute engages in research and promotes public policies to help Hoosier families achieve and maintain financial well-being. We believe that when Hoosiers are financially stable, they can achieve their full potential and better contribute to their communities. The Institute coordinates the Time Matters Indiana Coalition.