



# Models of Paid Family Leave

Presented August 11, 2016 by the Seattle Women's Commission

Presenters:

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# Seattle Women's Commission: Who We Are

- 21 Commissioners appointed by the Mayor, City Council and the Commission
- Our Commissioners represent widely varied backgrounds:
  - Professions including small business owners, non-profit workers, engineers, attorneys, public and union employees, child care workers, medical professionals, and educators
  - Ethnic and racial minorities
  - Immigrants
  - Formerly incarcerated
  - People who have received public assistance
  - Women who identify as LGBTQ
  - And more
- Our expertise is not only in policy but bringing our experiences to inform the policies we recommend

# Paid Family Leave is Our Top Policy Priority

- Our Workplan is developed every Fall, and it is subdivided evenly across our four sub-committees.
- In 2015, we chose to specifically highlight and elevate paid family leave as our number one policy priority for two years (2015-2017).

Our goal is to advocate for and see the passage of universal paid family leave in Seattle by 2017

# Why Paid Family Leave?

- The outcomes of Paid Family Leave affect all areas of the Women's Commission's work:
  - **Economic & Educational Opportunities**
    - Fuller participation in the workforce
    - Narrowing the wage gap
  - **Community Health & Wellness**
    - Maternal and infant health outcomes improve and hospital and medical costs are reduced
  - **Violence Prevention & Justice**
    - Decreased occurrences reported of domestic violence
  - **Equitable Development**
    - More stability for housing and decreased homelessness associated with costs of introducing an infant into the home

# How will this help Seattle?

- Those most deeply impacted will be:
  - **Our lowest wage workers**, which have more women and more people of color than private employers who already provide paid family/parental leave
  - **Our part-time workers**, who are more often women due to caretaking responsibilities, who have no access to paid leave benefits because they are not full time employees
  - **Women** overall, who are often penalized in the workforce with lower wages, discrimination after having children and are many times forced to opt-out of the workforce

Paid Family Leave is the single most impactful and feasible policy option available to the City of Seattle to narrow the gender wage gap

# How will this help Seattle?

- What we see as key components for the most equitable paid family leave policy:
  - **Universal** to all workers regardless of gender identity
  - **Pro-rateable** for part-time and underemployed workers
  - **Portable** across jobs so that benefits are not lost when switching between employment
  - **Strong Benefit Floor:** Provides the highest % of wages possible under public system for a minimum of 12 weeks



the work and family legal center

## **Paid Family and Medical Leave**

**Jared Make, Senior Staff Attorney  
A Better Balance**

**August 11, 2016**

# MAPPING PAID MATERNITY LEAVE:

HOW MANY WEEKS DO OTHER NATIONS PROVIDE COMPARED TO THE US?

SOURCE: NATIONMASTER.COM

**THINK  
PROGRESS**

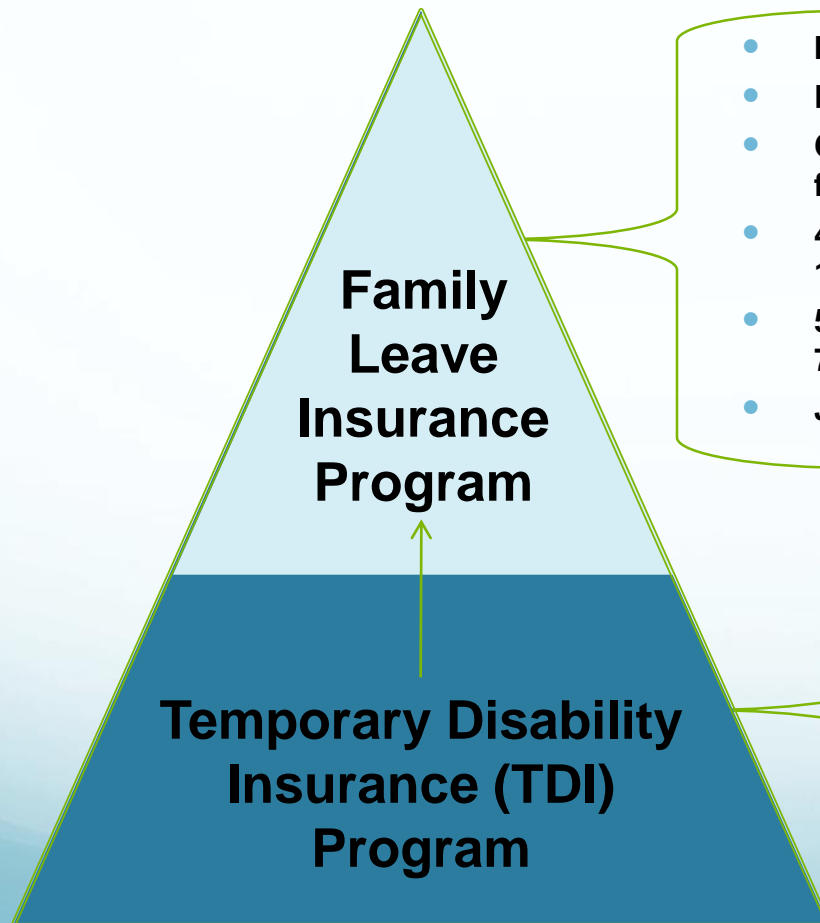




# Paid Family Leave Models

- **Social Insurance Program**
  - Employee contributions only
  - Employer contributions only
  - Shared employer-employee contributions
- Employer Requirement
- General Revenues Model
- Other Voluntary Models (tax credits, savings accounts)

# State Models: Existing Laws



- In place in CA, NJ, & RI. Passed in NY.
- Built on top of existing TDI programs
- Cover bonding with new children & care of seriously ill family. NY also covers certain military family needs.
- 4 weeks in RI, 6 weeks in CA & NJ. Once fully phased in, 12 weeks in NY.
- 55–67% wage replacement currently. CA raising to 60–70%. NY phasing up to 67%.
- Job-protected in RI and NY.

- ▶ In place for decades in CA, HI, NJ, NY and RI.
- ▶ Cover own serious health condition, including pregnancy, childbirth recovery and related medical conditions
- ▶ 26–52 weeks of partial wage replacement

# Goals: Key Principles/Features

- Covers all workers, wherever they work regardless of business size
- All participate
- Covers workers when they change jobs
- Gender-neutral, not just women
- Broad leave purposes
- Broad family definition
- Benefits calibrated to maximize uptake across income levels
- Protects employees' ability to use (job protection, non-retaliation)
- Funding mechanism and implementation
- Build on existing law when possible to do so and stay true to principles
- Build on rather than supplant, existing employer-provided leave, collective bargaining, etc.

# With Principles in Mind, Some Key Choices

- Eligibility rules
- Cost responsibility: employee-employer shared cost?
- Length of leave
- Benefit structure – flat, tiered or percentage
- Benefit level
- Administrative agency selection or alternative administrative mechanism

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

- **Website:** <http://www.abetterbalance.org>
- **Paid Family Leave Resources, Information:**  
<http://www.abetterbalance.org/web/ourissues/familyleave>
- **Paid Family Leave Comparison Chart:**  
<http://tiny.cc/familyleavechart>
- **Contact Information:**  
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