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:
  o Professions including small business owners, non-profit workers, engineers, attorneys, public and union employees, child care workers, medical professionals, and educators
  o Ethnic and racial minorities
  o Immigrants
  o Formerly incarcerated
  o People who have received public assistance
  o Women who identify as LGBTQ
  o 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
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
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

Family Leave Insurance Program

- 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.

Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) Program

- 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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