

SB 63 (Jackson)
New Parent Leave Act
Senator Jackson

SUMMARY

The New Parent Leave Act would provide up to 12 weeks of job-protected maternity and paternity leave for more California employees.

BACKGROUND

California falls behind the District of Columbia, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Oregon, Rhode Island, Washington and now New York in providing job-protected parental leave for small business employees. Under current law in California only those who work for an employer of 50 or more are eligible for job-protected parental leave. That leaves too many California workers without any job-protected family leave and many new parents struggling with an impossible choice between the well-being of their new child and their financial security.

Researchⁱ makes it clear that the first months and years are crucial to life success: over 80% of a child's total brain development happens in the first three years, and frequent, nurturing, parent-child interactions are key to strong brain development in the first three months. Experts including the American Academy of Pediatrics recommend that healthy full-term infants not be enrolled in child care until they are at least 12 weeks old due to rapid developmental changes and the risk of quickly developing severe undetected illness.ⁱⁱ Working parents must have the ability to spend the first key months of each child's life establishing a foundation for life success. Family Leave is not a luxury, it provides major biological and developmental benefits for a child.

PROBLEM

While California's worker-funded Paid Family Leave program provides employees with partial wage replacement while caring for a new child,

many employees are unable to use this benefit they pay into for fear of losing their jobs. In fact, a 2011 field poll found that almost 2 out of 5 employees who were eligible to use PFL, but did not apply for the benefit, chose not to because they feared losing their job or other negative consequences at work.

SOLUTION - NEW PARENT LEAVE

SB 63 (Jackson) ensures that more California workers who have been paying into the Paid Family Leave insurance program are able to use this benefit for parental leave without risk of losing their jobs. No one should have to choose between the wellbeing of their new child and their family's financial security.

Specifically, SB 63 would allow employees who work for a company with 20 or more employees, within a 75-mile radius, to take up to 12 weeks of job-protected leave to care for a new child.

This measure will benefit up to 2.7 million more Californians, but only affect 6 percent of the businesses.

While on leave the employer must maintain the employees' health insurance. To be eligible for the leave the employee must have worked for the company for at least a year and for at least half-time.

SUPPORTERS

California Employment Lawyers Association (sponsor)

First 5 California (sponsor)

Legal Aid at Work (sponsor)

ACLU

AFSCME

American Academy of Pediatrics

American Association of University Women

American College of Obstetricians and
Gynecologists
California Breastfeeding Coalition
California Child Care Resource and Referral
Network
California Labor Federation
California Latinas for Reproductive Justice
California Teachers Association
California Women’s Law Center
Child Care Law Center
Children Now
CLASP (Center for Law and Social Policy)
Common Sense Kids Action
Consumer Attorneys of California
Equal Rights Advocates
Health Officers Association of California
National Council of Jewish Women
NARAL Pro-Choice California
Nurse-Family Partnership
9 to 5, National Association of Working Women
Parent Voices
San Francisco Medical Society
Stronger California Advocates Network
Tradeswomen Inc.
Voices for Progress Education Fund
The Women’s Foundation of California
YWCA – San Francisco and Marin



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ⁱ National Scientific Council on the Developing Child (2007). *The Timing and Quality of Early Experiences Combine to Shape Brain Architecture: Working Paper #5*. <http://www.developingchild.net>

ⁱⁱ American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, and National Resource Center for Health and Safety in *and Safety Performance Standards*, Third Edition (2011). Child Care and Early Education, *Caring for Our Children: National Health*