

**REMARKS OF THE HON. ROSA L. DELAURO
WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE: MEMBER DAY
TUESDAY, JUNE 4TH, 2019**

Thank you, Chairman Richard Neal and Ranking Member Kevin Brady for welcoming me today. I am here to advocate for solutions to the problems facing working families that fall into your Committee's jurisdiction: the FAMILY Act for paid family and medical leave and the American Family Act to expand and strengthen the child tax credit.

It is time for paid family and medical leave. The United States is the only country among 41 developed nations that does not guarantee any type of paid paternity or maternity leave. And, only 17 percent of working people here have access to paid leave to care for a family member.

I was glad to see that last month, this Committee held its first hearing on paid leave. After many years on the margins, the issue of paid leave is finally at the center of the public discourse.

And, the FAMILY Act sets the gold standard, with regards to paid leave. It has 188 cosponsors in the House, 34 in the Senate.

- The FAMILY Act allows employees to receive up to 60 days, or 12 weeks, of partial income, for a health condition; injury or sickness to a child, parent, spouse, or domestic partner; the birth or adoption of a child; the injury of a family member in the military; or exigencies arising from a service member's deployment.
- It creates an independent and self-sustaining national insurance fund by having employees and employers pitch in together, with payroll contributions of two cents for every \$10 in wages. It is equivalent to \$1.50 per week for a typical worker.
- It would be managed under a new Office of Paid Family and Medical Leave within the Social Security Administration. But, it is separate and independent from

the Social Security Trust Fund so it does not impact the solvency of Social Security.

I am proud to say that my home state of Connecticut will soon join seven other states and Washington, D.C. by passing paid leave. But, we need a national policy. And, any proposal that stops short at parental leave only, does not cover at least up to 12 weeks, does not have a stable financing mechanism, or delays workers' benefits is insufficient and will not actually help workers.

Families need strong paid leave. And, they need a stronger and expanded child tax credit.

In continuation of my long history on the CTC, I introduced the American Family Act in the House. We have 181 co-sponsors in the House and 37 in the Senate.

The current child tax credit supports middle-class families and raises millions of children and families out of poverty. Yet,

according to Columbia University's Center on Poverty and Social Policy, there are considerable gaps that we can and should close.

Over half of Black and Hispanic children are left behind from the full credit (compared to 23 percent of White children). 70 percent of children in families headed by single moms do not receive the full credit (compared to 25 percent of children in two-parent households). And, 40 percent of children in families with young children do not either (compared to 29 percent of children in families with children older than 6).

The American Family Act is transformative for needy children, for working parents and for middle-class families.

- The American Family Act creates a Young Child Tax Credit equal to \$3,600 per year for children under 6 years of age.
- And, it makes the entire child tax credit fully refundable and indexed to inflation. We must. Current law excludes one third

of children from the full benefit because their parents earn too little.

A study out earlier this year from the National Academy of Sciences (“A Roadmap to Reducing Child Poverty”) found that a child allowance like the one created by the American Family Act would help reduce child poverty by 50 percent in the next decade (in combination with other anti-poverty measures).

So, the Congress has the opportunity, and I believe the responsibility, to be making opportunity real for families. I hope the committee will take up the FAMILY Act for paid leave and the American Family Act to expand and strengthen the successful child tax credit.

Working people and middle-class families cannot afford for us to delay.