

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

April 21, 2021

The Honorable Richard Neal
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means
1102 Longworth House Office Building

Dear Chairman Neal,

Thank you for convening this hearing on paid leave, child care, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women.

Republicans support expanding access to paid leave and child care, and want to work with Democrats to find the right way to help Americans better balance work and family.

Women have shouldered much of the burden of caregiving during the pandemic. Two million women left the labor force during COVID and a significant number remain unable to return to work or are disconnected from work altogether.

Working families deserve access to paid leave and child care tailored to their needs, not Washington's. Democrats' 'free' paid leave will cost nearly \$120,000 to a working family in permanently smaller paychecks—whether they use it or not.

Ways and Means Republicans have a proven record of supporting working families, including tax cuts that let them keep more of what they earn. Republicans doubled the child tax credit and enacted into law the first ever national policy on paid leave by creating the Family and Medical Leave Tax Credit to incentivize employers to offer up to 12 weeks of paid leave.

Republicans have also consistently supported increases in funding to expand access to affordable, high quality child care for low-income working families.

Ways and Means Republicans are working on a plan that will: increase access to paid family leave; build on what is already working; and ensure families can choose what works for them. Rather than an expensive Washington mandate and smaller paychecks, we support:

- Making permanent the Paid Family and Medical Leave Tax Credit that reimburses businesses up to 25 percent of the cost of providing paid leave to their employees.
- Making it easier for small businesses to offer formal paid leave benefits by increasing access to private insurance options or making it easier to pool together to defray costs.

- Low-wage workers are also at a disadvantage and the least likely to have access to paid leave through an employer. Federal efforts should be focused on low-income families, particularly families in at-risk communities where paid leave can contribute to better health for new mothers and their babies.

President Biden and Democrats continue to give lip service to bipartisanship—this would be a perfect place to begin.

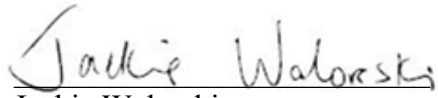
We have achieved bold, bipartisan solutions on behalf of working families in the past. That can be true going forward as well. If we do it right, we can empower moms and dads to pursue their careers while building strong and thriving families.

We are grateful for your focus on this issue and look forward to continuing this discussion.

Sincerely,



Kevin Brady
Republican Leader
Committee on Ways and Means



Jackie Walorski
Republican Leader
Worker and Family Support Subcommittee

CC:

The Honorable Danny Davis, Chairman, Worker and Family Support Subcommittee