



Oral Testimony in Support of HB8: the Time to Care Act of 2022
House Economic Matters Committee
February 15, 2022

- Good morning, I'm speaking in favor of HB 8: the Time to Care Act of 2022.
- I am Paula Molina Acosta. I've lived in Maryland for most of my life and I'm representing the National Partnership for Women & Families, an advocacy organization working to achieve equity for all women.
- At the very center of our mission is addressing the crisis that leaves just 23 percent of workers with access to paid family leave. As a society, we have chosen to let the rest, the vast majority of us, face a terrible choice between economic stability and the needs of our families or even our own health.
- Over the last two decades, the National Partnership has helped states develop paid leave programs that have strengthened families, businesses, the economy, and public health.
- In short, these state programs have proven that paid leave works. It's affordable for workers and employers and it's fiscally sound. Research highlights substantial benefits for families' well-being and economic stability, including a reduced need for public safety net aid. Unlike private plans, a public program covers the most vulnerable workers, those most in need of support.
- All of the state paid leave programs have proven to be financially stable. Despite their fears, once paid leave programs are implemented, businesses have faced minimal burdens, while citing benefits to employee morale, productivity and turnover rates. It's particularly helped small businesses to be able to offer benefits that allow them to compete with larger corporations.
- In these states, paid leave is immensely popular among voters of all stripes. This is why states who have implemented paid leave have been doubling down by expanding access, increasing benefits, and extending the duration of leave.
- We thank the committee for considering a paid leave program. We look forward to helping in any way we can. Thank you.