



AARP Statement for the Record
for the Hearing before the
House Committee on Education & Workforce
Subcommittee on Workforce Protections
on
“Balancing Careers and Care: Examining Innovative Approaches to Paid Leave”
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AARP, which advocates on behalf of the 125 million Americans ages 50 and older, appreciates the opportunity to submit a statement for the record for the House Committee on Education and Workforce Subcommittee on Workforce Protections hearing titled, “Balancing Careers and Care: Examining Innovative Approaches to Paid Leave.” This issue is important to the millions of workers, including older workers, who care for family and friends of any age and especially those who care for a child and an older family member or friend.

Caregiving touches nearly every family—across all ages, races, ethnicities, and segments of our population. With over 11,000 people turning 65 every day, the need for caregiving is only going to grow. The nation has [63 million family caregivers](#) who are the backbone of our long-term care system and a pillar of the broader paid workforce. They assist their older parents, spouses, siblings, grandparents, and other loved ones with routine care, managing medications, preparing and serving meals, grocery shopping, arranging transportation to medical appointments, and so much more. [Seventy percent](#) of all working-age caregivers work outside the home. Yet many workers, about [73 percent of private industry workers](#), do not have access to paid family leave through their employer.

Women accounted for nearly half (47 percent) of U.S. [workers in 2025](#), but are disproportionately responsible for caregiving duties. Although 1 in 4 Americans are caregivers for an adult or child with disabilities or complex medical conditions, 3 in 5 are women, according to an [AARP and National Alliance for Caregiving report](#). When women are forced to exit the workforce early due to family caregiving responsibilities, they are at a financial disadvantage with respect to Social Security, lifetime earnings, workplace benefits, and retirement savings. When they try to re-enter the workforce, older working women often have great difficulty finding reemployment, which can lead to long-term unemployment.

Paid parental leave is important, but it is only one part of the equation. More Americans than ever are caring for both children and older loved ones at the same time. Known as the sandwich generation, these caregivers are more likely than other caregivers to work while caring for others. According to a recent [AARP report](#) on sandwich generation caregivers of Medicare beneficiaries, nearly 75 percent are employed full-time or part-time on top of their dual caregiving duties and 60 percent are female.

Family caregivers, who show up every day and do the right thing, and their employers, who depend on them, need their government to support their efforts. Findings from the [AARP and National Alliance for Caregiving report](#) show that 35 percent of all caregivers spend more than 20 hours a week on caregiving. Nine percent of working caregivers gave up work entirely, and 18 percent reduced work hours or shifted to part-time work. Half of all working caregivers report negative work impacts, such as arriving late, leaving early, or taking time off from work to provide care. Paid leave keeps these individuals in the workforce while balancing their caregiving responsibilities. It helps employers retain valuable employees and simultaneously contributes to the employees’ long-term economic outlook. It is a true win-win.

In 2021, the estimated economic value of family caregivers’ unpaid contributions was approximately [\\$600 billion](#), a tremendous savings to taxpayers. Without them, America’s health

and long-term care systems would collapse. Further, a [study by AARP](#) found that providing support to age 50-plus family caregivers and allowing them to remain active participants in the labor force will support 10.7 million more jobs and a 5.6 percent increase in wages and salaries across the U.S. in 2030. In 2050, supporting caregivers age 50-plus in the workplace will support 13.1 million more jobs and result in a 6.7 percent increase in wages and salaries. Our country cannot afford to ignore this issue any longer.

AARP endorsed the bipartisan *More Paid Leave for More Americans Act*, which will help expand access to paid leave for hard-working Americans. We view it as an important first step towards meeting our shared goal of establishing a comprehensive paid leave program to help all Americans balance work and family responsibilities.

Currently, 13 states and D.C. have paid leave programs, but not all are the same, creating a situation where those who may move or work across state lines can find themselves navigating complex processes or differing rules and requirements to access their earned benefits. Often, multi-state employers struggle to determine paid leave benefits for their employees. AARP is pleased that the Interstate Paid Leave Action Network Act (I-PLAN) is included to help states coordinate their benefits, exchange and share data, establish policy standards, and reduce administrative burdens, ensuring workers are not mired in red tape when trying to access the benefits they have earned.

To support both a strong economy and family well-being, we must equip workers with the tools they need to meet their responsibilities at home and at work, and paid leave provides critical support to working family caregivers.

As Congress seeks ways to ensure America's workforce can meet the demands of our economy, ensuring access to paid family caregiving leave, not just parental leave, is a vital part of the equation. American workers should not have to leave the workforce, reduce their hours, or risk losing their job because of the frequent need to take time off to provide care for family and friends. AARP looks forward to continuing to work with the Committee to ensure greater coverage, particularly for family caregivers.