

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM  
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**MEMORANDUM**

**June 21, 2021**

**To: Members of the Committee on Oversight and Reform**

**Fr: Committee Staff**

**Re: Hearing on “Leading by Example: The Need for Comprehensive Paid Leave for the Federal Workforce and Beyond”**

On **Thursday, June 24, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. ET on the Zoom video platform**, the Committee will hold a remote hearing on H.R. 564, the Comprehensive Paid Leave for Federal Employees Act. H.R. 564 was introduced by Chairwoman Maloney on January 28, 2021. The bill would provide up to 12 weeks of paid leave to federal employees for the family-caregiving and medical needs specified in the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993.

**I. BACKGROUND**

Throughout the coronavirus pandemic, American workers have had to navigate unprecedented health challenges impacting them and their loved ones while balancing the continuing demands of their jobs. The pandemic has proven especially difficult for workers who have had to care for young children or for seriously ill family members. Many federal employees, including postal workers, have been on the frontlines of the government’s coronavirus pandemic response and have continued to deliver services to the American people.

In March 2020, Congress passed the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) (P.L. 116-127). The law provided paid leave for coronavirus-related reasons, helping to ensure that employees who were ill from or exposed to the coronavirus could afford to take time off from work and help keep themselves and others safe.<sup>1</sup> The American Rescue Plan Act, passed in March 2021, extended tax credits to businesses that offer paid family and medical leave and provided funding for emergency paid leave for federal employees.

The coronavirus pandemic has highlighted the need to make access to paid leave for American workers permanent. As the largest employer in the nation, the federal government can

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<sup>1</sup> Stefan Pichler, Katherine Wen, and Nicolas R. Ziebarth, *COVID-19 Emergency Sick Leave Has Helped Flatten the Curve in the United States*, Health Affairs (Oct. 15, 2020) (online at [www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hlthaff.2020.00863](http://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hlthaff.2020.00863)).

serve as a model for the implementation of family-friendly work policies for all employers through its adoption of paid family and medical leave.

## **II. COMPREHENSIVE PAID LEAVE FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYEES ACT**

In 2019, Congress passed legislation to guarantee paid parental leave to the 2.1 million employees of the federal government.<sup>2</sup>

H.R. 564, the Comprehensive Paid Leave for Federal Employees Act, introduced by Chairwoman Maloney, would provide federal employees up to 12 weeks of paid leave during a 12-month period for the following qualifying reasons specified in the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA):

- To care for a spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition;
- An employee's own serious health condition; or
- Qualifying circumstances resulting from a spouse, child, or parent being deployed or soon to be deployed to covered military active duty.

## **III. HEARING PURPOSE**

This hearing will examine H.R. 564 and explore how providing comprehensive paid family and medical leave would strengthen the federal workforce and create a model for a nationwide standard on paid leave.

## **IV. WITNESSES**

**Everett Kelley**  
National President  
American Federation of Government Employees

**Vicki Shabo**  
Senior Fellow  
Paid Leave Policy and Strategy, Better Life Lab  
New America

**Lelaine Bigelow**  
Interim Vice President for Economic Justice and Congressional Relations  
National Partnership for Women & Families

**Eric Sorkin**  
Co-Owner and Chief Executive Officer  
Runamok Maple

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<sup>2</sup> Federal Employee Paid Leave Act, Pub. L. No. 116-92 (2019).

**Additional Witness to Be Announced**

Staff contacts: Christina Parisi, Alan Alonso, and Courtney Miller at (202) 225-5051.