

Attention House Labor Committee,

I am writing in support of H 7171. I believe that expanding paid family leave is extremely important. I am a single parent to a now 6 year old boy and work full time as a clinical child psychologist at Hasbro Children's Hospital. When I had my son, it was both an incredibly happy time and a miracle for me but also an extremely anxiety provoking and stressful time. Maternity leave is hard. Breast feeding for me was impossible. Recovering from a C-section was painful and difficult. Navigating parenthood and adjusting to this major life change was extremely challenging, and I was lucky to have very close family around to help. The reality that my full leave was not paid was an added stressor, especially as a single parent with no other income. I personally was lucky to have family support, but I can't even imagine how others in different situations can manage. I took 4 months of maternity leave, which still wasn't enough time as just when things are finally settling, it's time to transition back to work. However, I'm forever grateful that I had that time to care for both my child's needs and my own and couldn't imagine being in a position to have to return to work after a fraction of that time because of financial needs. I believe that extended family leave is incredibly important so that people can be in better positions to continue in their jobs knowing that their family's needs are being addressed.

Thank you,  
Becca Laptok  
North Kingstown, RI