



To: House Committee on Labor  
From: Erich Haslehurst, National Education Association Rhode Island  
Date: February 14, 2024  
Re: Support of H-7171 Temporary Caregiver Insurance

On behalf of the National Education Association Rhode Island and our 12,000 members, we strongly support House Bill 7171.

This bill increases the temporary caregiver insurance from 6 weeks to 12 weeks which will put Rhode Island on even footing with our neighbors in Massachusetts and Connecticut. The bill also expands who qualifies for the insurance by including siblings, grandchildren, and the care recipient. It also increases the weekly dependent's allowance from \$10 to \$20 or 7% of the benefit rate – whichever is greater. The expansion of this program will have no cost to the state as it is entirely funded with payroll deductions.

Passing this bill into law is good for families, it is good for new parents who are caring for a newborn, it is good for those who are caring for their aging parents and grandparents, and it is good for those who need to care for loved ones who have had an emergency. This bill allows people the time they need to care for their families and loved ones without fear of losing their wages or having to choose between going to work and staying home to give that care. Passing this bill is also good for employers. When employees know that they will be able to give the care they need to their families when they need it the most it can result in better work performance and happier employees, generally.

For these reasons we urge you to bring this bill to the floor with a recommendation of passage.