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Testimony from Jocelyn Foye, executive director of The Womxn Project, in support of the bill to Extend Paid Family Leave (H7171)

The Womxn Project is a 501c4 that works toward reproductive justice and freedom in Rhode Island. The movement we stand behind is based on creating a culture that embraces the human dignity of all people living in Rhode Island and beyond.

One of The Womxn Project's core values is to ensure that people can create the family they want, with whom they want, when they want, with the number of children they want – or choose not to have a family at all. Part of settling into a healthy family life is being able to spend those precious, challenging early days with a newborn without worrying about the difficulties that working a job into that process poses. Currently, families are only given 6 weeks of paid family leave. Birthing people are still healing from childbirth at that point. They're exhausted, in the midst of the bonding process, and discovering how to fit a baby into their life. Going back to work at that point has detrimental effects on the birthing parent, the newborn, and the whole family.

Extending paid family leave from 6 to 12 weeks is a kindness that would protect the dignity of new families, support newborns in their early weeks of life, and improve economic outcomes of businesses by ensuring that their workers are rested and prepared to reenter the workforce after a life changing event. I urge you to support bill H7171 and help ensure families living within Rhode Island's borders have a healthy start.

Sincerely,
Jocelyn Foye
Executive Director, The Womxn Project

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