



IWV Supports the Strong Families Act

April 13, 2017

The Honorable Deb Fischer
United States Senate
454 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Fischer,

Independent Women's Voice, a 501(c)(4) organization for mainstream women, men and families, is proud to support the [Strong Families Act](#) and applauds your leadership on this important issue. This consequential legislation will do much to enact meaningful change for working mothers, particularly those living paycheck to paycheck.

We are lucky to live in a nation where most employers recognize the need to take time off from work. The [Bureau of Labor Statistics reports](#) that 80 percent of civilian full-time workers have paid sick leave, 87 percent have paid vacation, 5 percent have paid family leave, and 79 percent have unpaid family leave. Yet balancing work and family responsibilities can still be a real struggle for women, particularly working mothers, and policymakers can help ensure that workers can access the leave time they may need by making it easier for businesses to provide paid leave benefits. To achieve this, the focus should be on creating incentives for businesses to support their workers, not growing government.

The Strong Families Act does just that. It would encourage employers to offer paid leave without imposing a government-mandated paid leave program. Importantly, the bill creates a twenty-five percent nonrefundable tax credit for employers of any size that voluntarily provide their employees with at least two weeks of paid leave per year. This is exactly what workers need: A proposal that will increase the amount of benefits that businesses can afford, but without burdensome regulations that we know too often backfire on workers. We've seen too often how rigid government mandates not only lead to reduced flexibility for women in the workplace, but can also increase the cost of employment and eliminate jobs, particularly for workers with lower incomes.

We commend you for offering this important bill and for standing up for true workplace flexibility, economic opportunity, and workers everywhere.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'HRC', is written over a horizontal line that extends to the right.

President and CEO
Independent Women's Voice