



PROGRAM FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY, UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

AMERICANS ON FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE

-- Questionnaire --

Fielded by:	Nielsen Scarborough	Sample Size:	2,613 Registered Voters
Field Dates:	July 29 - Aug 23, 2021	Margin of Error:	+/- 1.9%

AMERICANS ON FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE

Questions 1-24 previously released.

Family leave means an employee taking a certain amount of time off from work to:

- take care of a newly born or newly adopted child (this is sometimes called 'parental leave')
- take care of a family member—a spouse, parent, or child—who has a serious health condition

Medical leave means an employee taking a certain amount of time off to recover from a serious health condition.

A **serious health condition** means that it requires professional treatment and makes a person unable to leave the hospital or their home for a period.

This is different from ordinary sick leave when a person may take a few days off for something like a cold.

As you may know, many workers--approximately 40%-- do not have the legal right to take family or medical leave, meaning that they can be fired if they do so.

Also, many workers, even if they can take leave, are not guaranteed any pay while they're on leave.

Overall,

- Only 40% of all workers are offered **paid medical leave**
- Only 20% of all workers are offered **paid family leave**

Another proposal would extend paid family and medical leave to all workers. Here is what is being proposed.

- All workers would be allowed to take up to 12 weeks of family or medical leave. The employer would not be legally allowed to fire those workers, if they took leave for valid family or medical reasons.
- Workers on leave would receive from the Federal government, two thirds of their earnings for up to 12 weeks, up to a maximum of \$4,000 a month.
- Workers would submit an application to the government, which must include a doctors 'note, and it must be determined that their reason for taking leave is valid.

The proposal is estimated to cost around \$23 billion a year.

Here are **two arguments in favor** of this proposal:

Q25. Clearly, people need to be able to take leave to take care of a new or newly adopted child. If there is no program for covering at least a part of their salaries, many will simply not be able to afford it. Extensive research shows that the bonds that form between newborn children and their parents in the first weeks of life have a critical effect on the child's healthy development. Failing to provide every child with this care not only hurts the child but leads to greater costs to society as such children are more likely to grow up and have various social and health problems. Every child deserves to get this care independent of its parents 'income.

	Very Convincing	Somewhat Convincing	Total Convincing	Somewhat Unconvincing	Very Unconvincing	Total Unconvincing	Refused / DK
National	36.3%	35.4%	71.7%	16.1%	9.8%	25.9%	2.5%
Republicans	20.3%	38.8%	59.1%	24.0%	15.2%	39.2%	1.6%
Democrats	51.0%	34.3%	85.3%	8.2%	4.5%	12.7%	1.9%
Independents	33.7%	30.8%	64.5%	18.7%	11.1%	29.8%	5.7%
Cook's PVI (D-R)							
Very red	38.4%	34.5%	72.9%	14.6%	7.0%	21.6%	5.5%
Somewhat red	33.3%	37.5%	70.8%	15.1%	10.6%	25.7%	3.6%
Lean red	31.6%	35.1%	66.7%	19.1%	13.0%	32.1%	1.2%
Lean blue	37.4%	33.6%	71.0%	18.0%	8.6%	26.6%	2.3%
Somewhat blue	37.6%	38.1%	75.7%	13.8%	8.7%	22.5%	1.9%
Very blue	43.4%	33.1%	76.5%	13.1%	9.6%	22.7%	0.8%

Q26. Unexpected illnesses happen, and people will exhaust their ordinary sick leave. While some companies do provide such medical leave, many do not. There needs to be a system in place so that they can recover from their illness and not completely lose their savings or go into debt. Four in ten American adults have so little in savings that they would not be able to cover a \$400 emergency expense. And it is those lowest income Americans that are least likely to have access to paid leave - around 5 times less likely than those with the highest incomes. People should also be able to care for a sick family member.

	Very Convincing	Somewhat Convincing	Total Convincing	Somewhat Unconvincing	Very Unconvincing	Total Unconvincing	Refused / DK
National	40.9%	38.8%	79.7%	13.5%	6.3%	19.8%	0.5%
Republicans	23.4%	46.4%	69.8%	20.8%	9.2%	30.0%	0.3%
Democrats	57.4%	32.0%	89.4%	6.6%	3.5%	10.1%	0.5%
Independents	37.5%	39.5%	77.0%	15.3%	7.0%	22.3%	0.7%
Cook's PVI (D-R)							
Very red	43.0%	36.2%	79.2%	14.0%	6.6%	20.6%	0.2%
Somewhat red	30.4%	49.5%	79.9%	13.0%	7.0%	20.0%	0.0%
Lean red	38.4%	40.1%	78.5%	14.1%	6.8%	20.9%	0.7%
Lean blue	41.2%	36.7%	77.9%	14.6%	6.6%	21.2%	1.0%
Somewhat blue	46.7%	33.8%	80.5%	13.4%	5.7%	19.1%	0.3%
Very blue	49.8%	34.7%	84.5%	10.7%	4.5%	15.2%	0.3%

Here are two arguments against this proposal:

Q27. America does not need another middle-class entitlement program that is likely to be inefficient and wasteful. It is really better for private employers to offer their own leave programs rather than having a one-size fits all government program. Whereas employers can provide flexible policies, government programs are rigid, burdensome, and impersonal. Many workers would prefer to request paid time off directly from their employer, rather than deal with the government, which would require obtaining medical records, filing a bunch of paperwork, and waiting weeks or more to see if they are eligible for benefits. We should look to private employers to set up programs to help their workers set aside some of their wages so that they can cover the cost of leave should they need it.

	Very Convincing	Somewhat Convincing	Total Convincing	Somewhat Unconvincing	Very Unconvincing	Total Unconvincing	Refused / DK
National	23.4%	31.0%	54.4%	20.8%	22.6%	43.4%	2.3%
Republicans	35.9%	37.4%	73.3%	17.3%	7.8%	25.1%	1.7%
Democrats	10.9%	25.6%	36.5%	23.8%	37.5%	61.3%	2.3%
Independents	28.1%	30.6%	58.7%	20.8%	17.0%	37.8%	3.5%

Cook's PVI (D-R)							
Very red	23.4%	35.4%	58.8%	20.5%	16.6%	37.1%	4.1%
Somewhat red	24.8%	31.1%	55.9%	19.3%	21.3%	40.6%	3.5%
Lean red	24.5%	27.3%	51.8%	22.1%	23.7%	45.8%	2.4%
Lean blue	25.5%	31.4%	56.9%	22.1%	20.0%	42.1%	1.0%
Somewhat blue	23.1%	30.4%	53.5%	20.3%	24.5%	44.8%	1.7%
Very blue	16.0%	32.6%	48.6%	18.8%	30.8%	49.6%	1.7%

Q28. This plan is likely to only help middle- and upper-income people, who do not really need it all that much. Lower income people, who live paycheck to paycheck are generally not able to take a one third cut in their income. That's why in some states that have paid family and medical leave programs, few low-income people use them. The people that use it the most tend to be middle and upper-income workers who can already afford to take time off.

	Very Convincing	Somewhat Convincing	Total Convincing	Somewhat Unconvincing	Very Unconvincing	Total Unconvincing	Refused / DK
National	18.1%	33.5%	51.6%	28.1%	19.3%	47.4%	1.0%
Republicans	24.0%	37.8%	61.8%	25.7%	11.3%	37.0%	1.2%
Democrats	12.1%	31.0%	43.1%	29.4%	26.4%	55.8%	1.0%
Independents	20.3%	30.4%	50.7%	29.8%	18.7%	48.5%	0.7%
Cook's PVI (D-R)							
Very red	25.8%	30.1%	55.9%	27.5%	15.5%	43.0%	1.2%
Somewhat red	15.9%	37.4%	53.3%	26.2%	18.8%	45.0%	1.7%
Lean red	20.1%	31.0%	51.1%	31.0%	17.3%	48.3%	0.7%
Lean blue	16.8%	37.7%	54.5%	25.2%	18.6%	43.8%	1.7%
Somewhat blue	14.4%	31.4%	45.8%	30.4%	23.7%	54.1%	0.2%
Very blue	17.7%	30.6%	48.3%	27.9%	23.2%	51.1%	0.6%

Here is a pair of arguments for and against this proposal:

Q29. Right now, it's mostly big corporations that can afford to offer paid leave. Because many workers want that protection, small businesses don't get some of the best workers. Offering paid leave to everyone would level the playing field. Plus, any business that already provides paid leave will have money freed up they can use to expand their business or offer other benefits to their employees.

	Very Convincing	Somewhat Convincing	Total Convincing	Somewhat Unconvincing	Very Unconvincing	Total Unconvincing	Refused / DK
National	21.7%	44.3%	66.0%	22.8%	9.6%	32.4%	1.6%
Republicans	11.1%	39.2%	50.3%	31.5%	16.1%	47.6%	2.0%
Democrats	30.3%	49.4%	79.7%	15.4%	3.7%	19.1%	1.2%
Independents	23.0%	42.7%	65.7%	22.2%	10.3%	32.5%	1.7%
Cook's PVI (D-R)							
Very red	23.6%	43.3%	66.9%	21.3%	8.9%	30.2%	2.9%
Somewhat red	19.2%	43.9%	63.1%	22.7%	11.9%	34.6%	2.2%
Lean red	18.9%	41.4%	60.3%	27.0%	11.8%	38.8%	0.8%
Lean blue	22.4%	46.5%	68.9%	19.7%	9.3%	29.0%	2.1%
Somewhat blue	24.1%	45.2%	69.3%	22.8%	6.9%	29.7%	1.0%
Very blue	24.3%	44.7%	69.0%	23.4%	6.9%	30.3%	0.7%

Q30. This system will be way too easy to abuse. It will be nearly impossible for the federal government to ensure that the millions of workers taking leave are doing so for honest reasons. All a worker will have to do to get paid leave from the government is tell their doctor that they're sick, get a note from the doctor, and then submit it to the government. As a result, workers will take leave more often. This will hurt businesses, slow down the economy, and cost the government billions.

	Very Convincing	Somewhat Convincing	Total Convincing	Somewhat Unconvincing	Very Unconvincing	Total Unconvincing	Refused / DK
National	25.6%	33.9%	59.5%	21.8%	18.0%	39.8%	0.6%
Republicans	41.3%	38.5%	79.8%	13.0%	6.3%	19.3%	0.9%
Democrats	11.3%	29.4%	40.7%	29.3%	29.6%	58.9%	0.4%
Independents	27.6%	35.1%	62.7%	22.1%	14.5%	36.6%	0.6%
Cook's PVI (D-R)							
Very red	28.6%	34.9%	63.5%	21.2%	14.4%	35.6%	0.8%
Somewhat red	27.0%	35.5%	62.5%	16.3%	20.7%	37.0%	0.4%
Lean red	31.7%	31.0%	62.7%	22.5%	14.2%	36.7%	0.6%
Lean blue	27.7%	33.8%	61.5%	22.5%	14.9%	37.4%	1.1%
Somewhat blue	19.6%	38.1%	57.7%	22.8%	19.0%	41.8%	0.6%
Very blue	14.4%	30.6%	45.0%	26.7%	28.2%	54.9%	0.1%

Q31. Now, here again is the proposal:

- All workers would be allowed to take up to 12 weeks of family or medical leave. The employer would not be legally allowed to fire those workers if they took leave for valid family or medical reasons.
- Workers on leave would receive from the Federal government, two thirds of their earnings for up to 12 weeks, up to a maximum of \$4,000 a month.
- Workers would submit an application to the government, which must include a doctors 'note, and it must be determined that their reason for taking leave is valid.

The proposal is estimated to cost around \$23 billion a year

How acceptable would you find this proposal, where 0=not at all acceptable, 5=just tolerable, and 10=very acceptable?

	Very Unacceptable (0-4)	Just Tolerable (5)	Very Acceptable (6-10)	Refused / Don't Know
National	39.9%	12.5%	47.4%	0.2%
Republicans	61.9%	12.9%	24.6%	0.6%
Democrats	19.6%	11.2%	69.2%	0.0%
Independents	42.9%	15.1%	41.9%	0.0%
Cooks PVI (D-R)				
Very red	41.8%	15.0%	43.0%	0.2%
Somewhat red	46.0%	12.1%	41.7%	0.1%
Lean red	42.7%	11.5%	45.3%	0.5%
Lean blue	42.6%	13.2%	44.1%	0.1%
Somewhat blue	35.0%	13.7%	51.1%	0.2%
Very blue	25.6%	10.4%	63.7%	0.3%

Q32. Now finally, do you favor or oppose this proposal?

	Favor	Oppose	Refused / Don't Know
National	59.1%	39.5%	1.4%
Republicans	35.0%	63.5%	1.5%
Democrats	81.8%	17.3%	0.9%
Independents	54.6%	43.0%	2.5%
Cook's PVI (D-R)			
Very red	55.5%	44.3%	0.2%
Somewhat red	55.0%	43.6%	1.4%
Lean red	53.4%	45.7%	0.9%
Lean blue	58.2%	40.5%	1.3%
Somewhat blue	64.8%	32.7%	2.5%
Very blue	72.1%	25.7%	2.2%

Questions 33-36 held for future release.