



December 10, 2019

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the National Treasury Employees Union, which represents approximately 150,000 federal employees in 33 agencies, I am writing in support of paid parental leave for federal workers. Thanks to the tremendous effort by Chairman Smith and others, the paid parental leave provision is part of the final National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) conference report, which is likely to be voted on this week. We now have a chance to bring the federal government into the 21st century and improve its ability to compete with the private sector for talented employees. We request that you **vote YES** on the NDAA Conference Report.

NTEU has worked with Chairwoman Carolyn Maloney, a long-time champion of this movement, since 2003 to provide paid parental leave for federal employees. Legislation providing this benefit has twice passed the House but received no action in the Senate following bill introduction. When we started this movement, we wanted the federal government to be a leader in providing this benefit. Now, we are lagging behind the private sector, and federal agencies are finding it increasingly difficult to attract younger workers, who see this benefit as a crucial and standard part of their compensation.

In general, it takes federal workers over three years to save enough sick leave to cover even a short 6-8 weeks of leave following the arrival of a child – and that's without taking a single day of sick leave during those three years. Some of my members report that they have worked while being sick themselves because all of their leave was used up on the birth of their child. And, if an employee has a sick family member and uses up sick leave for that situation, there is nothing left to use upon the birth of a child.

While the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) allows 12 weeks of leave for the birth or adoption of a child, it is unpaid leave. Few federal employees can afford to take weeks of unpaid leave. The FMLA has been a terrific first step, but we believe that no federal employee should be forced to choose between a paycheck and caring for the newest member of the family. We hope you agree.

Paid parental leave will help the federal government recruit and retain dedicated and talented workers and has been shown to lead to increased productivity, better morale and reduced absenteeism. It will also save the federal government money by reducing turnover, significantly reducing the costs of recruiting and training new employees.

Paid parental leave is an incredibly important benefit for federal employees. Therefore, I urge you to **vote YES** on the NDAA Conference Report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anthony M. Reardon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial 'A'.

Anthony M. Reardon
National President