

Washington, DC – The U.S. House of Representatives today took a significant step toward improving paid parental leave benefits for federal employees who are new parents. The Federal Employees Paid Parental Leave Act of 2009 (H.R. 626), which passed the House this evening by a 258 to 154 vote, responds to the needs of tens of thousands of working families in the federal government by providing four weeks of paid parental leave for the birth, adoption, or fostering of a child.

House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Chairman Edolphus “Ed” Towns (D-NY) believes that the federal government, as the largest employer in America, should set the tone for the rest of the country in this area. Chairman Towns has stated his commitment to improving federal workforce policies that will improve the rate of employee retention, including when workers are new parents. Last month, Towns’ committee approved the parental leave legislation.

“The federal government’s success depends on recruiting a talented workforce, so we must implement workplace benefits that will make it more competitive with other employers, including the private sector,” said Chairman Towns. “Providing paid parental leave is a major step toward achieving this important goal.”

Implementing employee retention policies such a paid parental leave are also cost-saving measures for the federal government. For example, it costs almost 20 percent of an employee’s salary to hire and train new workers, compared with only 8 percent to provide an existing, experienced employee with four weeks of paid leave.

“The taxpayers directly benefit when the government retains existing employees, rather than having to hire and re-train new ones,” said Chairman Towns. “I am pleased the House passed this important bill that critical to the future of the federal workforce.”

H.R. 626 was introduced this Congress by Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) and Senator Jim Webb (D-VA) sponsored the companion legislation in the Senate. Last year, the legislation was approved by the Oversight Committee and was passed by the House of Representatives.

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**Documents and Links**

- [Huffington Post - Providing Parental Leave Benefits Invests in Federal Working Families](#)