



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS  
WITH DISABILITIES**

**Statement on the Family Medical Leave Modernization Act**

Submitted as testimony to the House Education and Labor Committee's  
Subcommittee on Workforce Protections Hearing on "Balancing Work, Health, and Family: The  
Case for Expanding the Family and Medical Leave Act."

February 11, 2020

The undersigned members of the Developmental Disabilities, Autism and Family Support Task Force of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) express our strong support for the Family Medical Leave Modernization Act (H.R. 5456). CCD is the largest coalition of national organizations working together to advocate for federal public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society.

Our organizations serve and advocate on behalf of persons with a range of intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), such as autism, Down syndrome, and cerebral palsy. The vast majority of our constituents live in the family home and families are overwhelmingly their primary source of support. Unfortunately, the significant and growing reliance on families is not being met with policies that help families to balance their work and family responsibilities.

The Family and Medical Leave Act currently only includes family leave to care for a spouse, son, daughter, or parent. H.R. 5456 acknowledges the broader nature of family caregiving relationships, and expands the law to cover siblings, domestic partners, adult children, and others. This expansion is needed to address significant changes in the American workforce and the conception of family since the Family and Medical Leave Act was first enacted. More women have entered the workforce and some state laws now confer family rights to persons not related by blood or marriage, such as domestic partners.

The Family Medical Leave Modernization Act would help to take pressure off millions of working Americans, including those who have a family member with a disability. This legislation is especially important for siblings of persons with I/DD when their parents grow older and can no longer fulfill their caregiving responsibilities.

We are also particularly appreciative that the bill expands covered leave to include parental involvement and family wellness leave to attend school functions and other family care needs. This will ensure that no parent of child with disabilities will have to risk job security for attending his/her child's individualized education plan (IEP) or other disability-related service meetings.

Allies for Independence  
American Network of Community Options & Resources  
Autism Society of America  
Autistic Self Advocacy Network  
Center for Public Representation  
CommunicationFIRST  
Easterseals  
Family Voices  
National Alliance for Caregiving  
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities  
National Center for Parent Leadership, Advocacy, and Community Empowerment  
National Disability Rights Network  
National Down Syndrome Congress  
National Respite Coalition  
Special Needs Alliance  
TASH  
The Arc of the United States