

To Whom It May Concern:

The Christian tradition sees both family life and work as two God-given spheres of human responsibility. We believe God’s design for human flourishing includes healthy families and a proper understanding that there is inherent dignity in work of all types. The family is the most basic human institution. We recognize family’s inherent God-given value, as well as its value to a healthy society. The inherent value of work is also prevalent throughout scripture. In Genesis 2 we are told that humanity was placed in the Garden of Eden to “work it and take care of it”.

Yet, many families experience work and family life as sources of constant conflict.

Because family is foundational to society and contributes to strong communities, we believe that community institutions, including places of work, have a responsibility to respect and support family life, as does government. We believe that in order for government to uphold a just society, it must uphold the integrity and social viability of all families. The rhythms of family life should be honored, and all people should be able to attend to seasons of family caregiving.

Because of these foundational beliefs, we believe that our community needs paid family leave. There are many ways to design such a policy, and we may not agree on all of the details, but we are united around the following principles that should inform the policy design and application.

- 1. Respect the dignity of all workers.** Each worker reflects the Imago Dei and should be treated in a way that enables and protects family time for both men and women and for workers of all job types and status. (The Parable of the Vineyard. Matthew 20:1-16)
- 2. Honor caregiving.** Family caregiving – be it for a new child, an ailing or aging family member – is worthy work that should be recognized and supported. (“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted.” Ecclesiastes 3:1-2)
- 3. Provide practical support.** Workplace family support should be effective in meeting the urgent support needs of families at crucial life inflection points. (“This is what the Lord Almighty said: ‘Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another.’ Zechariah 7:9)

4. **Address system challenges.** Address barriers to family stability and prevent family disintegration for households with low income or without the advantage of family wealth. (“I know that the Lord secures justice for the poor and upholds the cause of the needy.” Psalm 140:12)
5. **Support economic vitality.** Public policy should support the flourishing of employers providing family-supportive policies and practices. There should be a special emphasis on preserving nonprofit, religious, and small business organizations’ ability to flourish in providing family-supports. (“Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.” 2 Corinthians 9:6)
6. **Responsibly steward finances.** Steward well both resources provided and costs allocated for family supportive policies and practices. (The Parable of the Talents. Matthew 25:14-30)

As Christians, our faith calls us to exercise our political authority. The purpose of government is to advance flourishing. Family flourishing requires protected time together, particularly during seasons and events of critical family care. In order to have a vibrant, pluralist economy of workplaces, employers need support in helping families have protected time together. Our desire to see our community flourish moves us to support a principled paid family leave policy in our community.

Sincerely,
[Sign on with friends and allies below]