

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

**BACKGROUND
ON
THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT**

"The Family and Medical Leave Law... allows parents time off for birth or adoption of a child, or for family emergencies, without fear that they will lose their jobs. Already it has helped 12 million families -- and it hasn't hurt the economy one bit. Bill and I are fortunate that our jobs have allowed us to take breaks from work, not only when Chelsea was born but to attend her school events and take her to the doctor. But millions of other parents can't get time off.

"That's why my husband wants to expand the Family and Medical Leave Law so that parents can take time off for their doctors appointments and parent-teacher conferences."

-- Hillary Rodham Clinton
Democratic National Convention
August 27, 1996

Family and Medical Leave ensures that working families don't have to choose between the jobs they need and the families they love. Because of family and medical leave, working families do not face losing their jobs at the time when they need them most -- when they have newborn or newly adopted children, when they need to care for seriously ill children, spouses, or parents, and when they need to recover from their own serious illnesses.

Family and Medical Leave has helped millions of American working families.

- ▶ Since President Clinton signed the Family and Medical Leave Act, employees across America have taken over 12 million job-protected leaves.
- ▶ 67 million eligible employees can rely on the Family and Medical Leave Act if and when they need its protections.
- ▶ People from all walks of life, from all across the country, from every political, religious, and ethnic group have used Family and Medical Leave. Working women and men have taken Family and Medical Leave; fully 42% of leave-takers are men.
- ▶ Connecticut is a leading proponent of family leave legislation, having passed a state law in 1989. A total of 670,000 workers are eligible for family leave in Connecticut under the national Family and Medical Leave Act.

Family and Medical Leave has not created significant costs or burdens on business; it has even *improved* productivity at some companies.

- ▶ The vast majority of employers covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act have experienced no or only small increases in administrative and related costs because of it.
- ▶ More than three quarters of covered employers have found it very or somewhat easy to coordinate Family and Medical Leave benefits and laws, determine coverage and

eligibility, and maintain required records.

- ▶ Many employers have found that Family and Medical Leave actually saves them money in reduced turnover and enhanced employee productivity.

President's Clinton's vision: to help working families who need family and medical leave even more.

- ▶ Two out of five working Americans anticipate needing family and medical leave over the next five years.
- ▶ But Family and Medical Leave isn't available when parents need to go to parent-teacher conferences, or to take their children or other family members to the doctor for regular medical appointments.
- ▶ President Clinton has proposed expanding the Family and Medical Leave Act to allow working parents that extra flexibility through an additional 24 hours of leave a year for parent-teacher conferences and preventive check-ups.
- ▶ Bob Dole *opposes* even this modest expansion. He says *he* doesn't believe the federal government should help working families in this way.

Today Clinton-Gore '96 is highlighting the law nationwide. Four years ago on this same date, then-Republican Leader Bob Dole cast his vote to uphold President Bush's veto of the Family and Medical Leave Act. Forty-three events are taking place across the country to highlight President Clinton's commitment to America's working families.

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