

RELEASE: House Votes to Pass Paid Family and Medical Leave, Advances Senate Bill 1

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PRESS RELEASE

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HOUSE VOTES TO PASS PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE, ADVANCES SENATE BILL 1

CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE – The House of Representatives voted [219-142](#) to support [Senate Bill 1](#), which establishes a family and medical leave insurance program.

“Passing Senate Bill 1 is a critical step towards Granite Staters having access to affordable paid family and medical leave insurance. No one should have to choose between financial security and caring for a loved one. Today’s vote is a vote for the future of our state that will help us care for an aging population, combat the opioid epidemic, and attract and retain the workforce of tomorrow. When crafting our bipartisan paid leave proposals, House and Senate Democrats paid particular attention to the concerns raised by Governor Sununu in the last biennium,” said **Representative Mary Jane Wallner (D-Concord), chair of the House Finance Committee**

Majority Leader Doug Ley (D-Jaffrey) added: “Senate Bill 1, like House Bill 712, is a well-constructed, sustainable plan to provide affordable access to paid family and medical leave insurance. Today’s vote moves us closer to helping NH families retain financial security when they need time out from work to care for themselves or their families. Unfortunately, Governor Sununu has threatened to veto this bill despite the support of 82% of Granite Staters for a program like the one we passed today, even though he’s heard loud and clear from insurance companies that his idea simply won’t work. It’s time that we move forward with real, actionable policy and work to provide paid family and medical leave insurance to all Granite Staters.”

For background:

Governor Sununu has voiced opposition to bills modeled after successful family and medical leave insurance programs, instead suggesting an untested voluntary concept. This week the responses from Governor Sununu’s Request for Information were publicly released by the Governor of Vermont. An analysis of the responses submitted shows that insurance companies have several concerns about the Governor’s “Twin State Voluntary Paid Leave Program”.

- The leading concern from companies about a voluntary market is the ability to price the insurance appropriately.
- Small businesses and their employees are the least likely to have access to paid family and medical leave, yet the multi-tiered rate structure could penalize by creating different risk pools that would likely be more expensive.
- None of the companies responding to the RFI were able to provide pricing information for employees in the private sector because of the uncertainty surrounding the composition of the insurance pool.
- In all cases where specific cost estimates were included, those costs exceed the premium costs of the program proposed by New Hampshire legislators in SB1 and HB712.
- Anthem's reply also reveals as false the Governors' claims that the insurance provider would bear the entire risk of the program: Anthem would charge between 3% and 6% in *additional* contingency and risk margin fees to administer the funds.

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