

# **Durbin joins group of 27 senators to reintroduce Family Act**

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) today joined Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and 25 other senators to reintroduce the Family and Medical Insurance Leave Act, or FAMILY Act, legislation that would create a universal, gender-neutral paid family and medical leave program.

“Your bank account balance should not determine your ability to care for a loved one when illness strikes. Yet for millions of Americans, caring for an elderly parent or sick child means losing a day’s wages, or worse, losing one’s job,” said Senator Durbin.

“The FAMILY Act empowers families while helping employers retain their workforce and saving our economy billions of dollars. I expect my pro-family colleagues will agree that passing this legislation is the right thing to do.”

“The vast majority of working families don’t have access to paid leave, and as a working mom, I understand the urgency of this problem,” said Senator Gillibrand. “Every day that goes by without a national paid family leave program, workers will continue to lose income, they’ll continue to lose their jobs, and businesses will continue to lose employees. We need to pass the FAMILY Act and give every working American access to paid leave when they need it.”

The United States is the only industrialized nation without a national paid leave program, and only 14 percent of American workers have access to paid family leave through their employer. Without a national paid family leave program, the U.S. economy loses \$21 billion a year, women lose \$324,000 in wages and retirement benefits over a lifetime and men lose \$284,000. A lack of a national paid leave program hurts businesses; studies show that businesses incur an additional 20 percent cost to recruit and retrain new workers replacing others who left because they did not have paid leave.

The FAMILY Act creates a self-sustaining family insurance program for all workers – young and elderly, single and married, and men and women, regardless of the size of their employer. Modeled after successful state programs, and costing only as much as a cup of coffee per week, the fund would provide up to 66 percent wage-replacement for 12 weeks in the event of a serious personal or family medical emergency.