

**SB 654 (Jackson)
New Parent Leave Act
Senator Jackson**

SUMMARY

The New Parent Leave Act would provide up to 6 weeks of job-protected maternity and paternity leave for more California employees.

BACKGROUND

California falls behind the District of Columbia, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Oregon, Washington and now New York in providing job-protected parental leave for small business employees. Under current law only those who work for an employer of 50 or more are eligible for job-protected parental leave under California law. That leaves too many California workers without any job-protected family leave and many new parents struggling with an impossible choice between the wellbeing of their new child and their family's financial security.

Experts including the American Academy of Pediatrics recommend that healthy full-term infants should not be enrolled in child care until they are at least 12 weeks old due to rapid developmental changes and the risk of quickly developing severe undetected illness.¹

PROBLEM

While California's worker funded Paid Family Leave program provides employees with partial wage replacement while caring for a new child, many employees are unable to use this benefit for fear of losing their jobs. In fact, a 2011 field poll found that almost 2 out of 5 employees who were eligible to use PFL, but did not apply for the benefit, chose not to because they feared losing their job or other negative consequences at work.

¹ American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, and National Resource Center for Health and Safety in *and Safety Performance Standards*, Third Edition (2011). Child Care and Early Education, *Caring for Our Children: National Health*

SOLUTION - NEW PARENT LEAVE

SB 654 (Jackson) ensures that more California workers who have been paying into the Paid Family Leave insurance program are able to use this benefit for parental leave without risk of losing their job. No one should have to choose between the wellbeing of their new child and their family's financial security.

Specifically, SB 654 would allow employees who work for a company with 20 or more, within a 75-mile radius, to take up to 6 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to care for a new child.

This measure will benefit up to 16 percent of the workforce, but only effect 6 percent of the businesses.

While on leave the employer must maintain the employees' health insurance. To be eligible for the leave the employee must have worked for the company for at least a year and for at least half-time.

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