



**RANDY
VOEPEL**
71ST ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

AB 372 - Infant at Work Program

SUMMARY

AB 372 would authorize a state agency to adopt the Infant at Work program which allows an employee of the agency who is a new parent or caregiver to bring the infant, age six weeks to six months (or until crawling), to the workplace.

BACKGROUND

California is ranked in the top 10 of *least* affordable states for infant care. Data from a 2015 Childcare Aware America Report found that in comparison to California's median income, a married couple spends roughly 14.5% of their income annually on infant care whereas single parents spend nearly 45%. Federal guidelines suggest child care should consume no more than 10% of a family's income. According to a 2014 analysis in The Sacramento Bee, an average infant daycare in the state of California costs \$1,110 per month.

The most vital stage of brain development is during infancy. A loving, nurturing bond between an infant and caregiver has been proven to have long term effects on developing healthy relationships throughout life and may be significantly impaired if a bond with the primary caregiver is not established during infancy.

Similar programs in have been adopted in Arizona (January 2017) and Washington (July 2015) after both states found success in pilot programs. Benefits following the pilot programs

in Arizona and Washington include infant/parent bonding, potential relief of financial strain due to the high cost of childcare, increased productivity among employees, and easier breastfeeding accessibility for to mothers. By increasing access to breastfeeding, the state of Washington found an overall reduction in health care costs for babies during the pilot program. Both states reported the boost of employee morale and increased parent productivity.

SOLUTION

AB 372 is intended to help alleviate the burden of cost-prohibitive childcare facing parents and caregivers by allowing infants, ages six weeks to six months, to come to work with their parent or caregiver working in a specified state department.

AB 372 is intended to expand options to parents and may encourage employees to come back to work before the end of parental leave.

Finally, AB 372 is intended to continue to raise happy, healthy babies and promote bonding among parents and infants, which has long-term effects on the child.