'23

A YEAR IN REVIEW

House Bipartisan Paid Family Leave Working Group

Washington, D.C.
December 2023

Letter

PAID FAMILY LEAVE
WORKING GROUP

December 11, 2023

Dear Reader,

In January 2023, we proudly launched the bipartisan Paid Family Leave Working Group in the House of Representatives - the first bipartisan Working Group of House Members dedicated to this issue. The Working Group's primary objective is to lead the development of bipartisan paid leave policies that will provide American workers, families, and businesses with the support they desperately need.

We began our work by developing a deep understanding of the problem, familiarizing ourselves with relevant stakeholders, and exploring all potential solutions. Over the past year, we conducted six member-level informational briefings which drew a diverse group of over 40 stakeholders for a thorough exploration of paid family leave policy.

We kicked off our briefings in February with a commemoration of the passage of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). We learned from key players involved in the FMLA's passage about the process of enacting a sustainable policy that supports workers, families, and businesses. Over the subsequent seven months, we heard from state paid leave program administrators, representatives from private insurance companies offering paid family leave benefits, small business owners, representatives of large employers and trade associations, and advocates from caregiving communities. Each participant brought forth a unique and valuable perspective, enriching our understanding of the issue as we prepare to transition into shaping policy solutions in 2024.

Sincerely, Members of the Paid Family Leave Working Group

Representative Chrissy Houlahan (D-PA), Co-Chair.

Representative Stephanie Bice (R-OK), Co-Chair.

Representative Colin Allred (D-TX).

Representative Julia Letlow (R-LA).

Representative Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R-IA).

Representative Haley Stevens (D-MI).

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Background

February 5, 2023, marked the 30-year anniversary of the passage of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). This landmark piece of legislation was the first-ever federal leave policy and has had a tremendous impact on American families. It provides eligible workers with 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to bond with a new child, care for a seriously ill family member, or recover from a serious personal health condition.

While the FMLA was a critical first step towards providing working parents with the flexibility to manage personal and familial obligations, it only guarantees eligible employees unpaid time off from work. Today, only 27% of American workers have access to paid family leave provided by their employer.[i] Furthermore, only 56% percent of Americans can take advantage of FMLA because of its stringent eligibility requirements, leaving many without job protection.[ii] Due to these limitations, employees frequently find themselves having to choose between their jobs and their families. In fact, one in four new moms go back to work within two weeks of giving birth.[iii]

Our members understand that the landscape of the labor market has evolved over the years, highlighting the need for paid family leave benefits. Households with two working parents are now the norm, while caregiving responsibilities have increased. Among married couples with children, 65%[iv] had both parents employed in 2022, up from 58%[v] in 2010. Moreover, eldercare responsibilities are increasing as more than one in six adults are 65 years or older, a

trend expected to persist as the Baby Boomer generation ages [vi] Consequently, many prime-working-age adults find themselves in a "sandwich generation," struggling between caring for elderly family members and children at home. In 2021-2022, 21% of eldercare providers were parents of children under the age of 18.[vii]

These challenges disproportionately affect women, who account for 75% of those caring for the elderly.[viii] The Urban Institute estimates that unpaid caregiving results in mothers facing an average of $295,000 in employment-related costs over a lifetime, which includes a 15% reduction in lifetime earnings and a subsequent reduction in retirement income. These caregiving pressures combined with personal health needs prevent many working-age adults from entering the workforce. A 2023 Bipartisan Policy Center – Artemis Strategy Group survey found that 33% of prime-age adults out of the workforce cite caring for children as the main reason they are not working .[x] Notably, respondents placed considerable importance on paid family and medical leave, ranking it as just as important as financial compensation when contemplating reentering or entering the workforce.

Next Steps

Three decades after the enactment of FMLA, it is time for the United States to introduce a paid family leave policy that meets the needs of our economy, businesses, and American families. The U.S. is behind other industrialized nations in guaranteeing employees paid leave – it is one of only six countries in the world without a national paid parental leave policy.[xi] In addition, the U.S. is the only country in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) without [xii][xiii]a national paid parental leave policy.[xiv]

The federal government has also fallen behind the states: In the absence of a comprehensive federal paid family leave policy, 13 states and the District of Columbia have taken the initiative to enact mandatory paid family leave programs. An additional eight states have enacted voluntary paid leave systems. This patchwork of programs results in major compliance challenges for the private sector.

We established our bipartisan Working Group to break through the partisan gridlock that has prevented paid family leave solutions from becoming law. Our members

understand that paid family leave is pro-economy, pro-business, and pro-family, and affects a wide array of stakeholders across these areas.[xv]

When more workers have access to paid family leave, families thrive. Research consistently shows that paid family leave improves the economic and health outcomes of parents and children. Several studies have demonstrated that access to paid leave positively impacts working mothers, aiding their return to the workforce after welcoming a new child and leading to long-term benefits for their careers. Research has also shown that maternal and paternal bonding with newborns in their first weeks of life is vital for the long-term physical and mental health and development of children.[xvi] The provision of paid family leave also contributes to a reduced likelihood of postpartum depression among mothers. [xvii] Additionally, when fathers form early bonds with their infants, they are more likely to engage in childcare responsibilities.[xviii]

As elected representatives, it is our responsibility to enact policies that address the needs of the modern family and support our economy.

2023 Briefings

Throughout the past year, our Working Group was honored to convene a series of educational meetings to gather input from a wide range of advocates, employers, and experts who collectively painted a nuanced picture of the different considerations in crafting federal paid family leave policy. This input proved vital to building our own understanding of paid family leave, providing us with valuable lessons that will guide our work moving forward.

Our series of briefings included: The Origins of the Family and Medical Leave Act, Lessons Learned from the States, Insights from the Private Insurance Industry, Perspectives of Small Business Leaders, Large Employers and the Paid Family Leave Landscape, and Caregiving and Paid Leave:

The Origins of the Family and Medical Leave Act

Date: February 7, 2023
Panelists:

- Former Senator Chris Dodd (D-CT)
- Stephanie Monroe, Former Republican HELP Committee Staff
- *Moderator*: Adrienne Schweer, Fellow, Bipartisan Policy Center

Commemorating the 30th Anniversary of the FMLA, we kicked off our briefings by welcoming two key figures behind its enactment: former Senator Chris Dodd (D-CT) and former Republican Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee staffer Stephanie Monroe. Their discussion shed light on the bipartisan efforts behind this groundbreaking policy that continues to shape and influence the nation's approach to family and medical leave today.

Senator Dodd started the conversation by sharing his inspiration for working on FMLA. He told us how, nearly 40 years ago, he met a single working mother with a special needs child in the last pew at his church. After hearing their story, meeting with experts, and seeing his own staff undergo cancer treatment while working, he was inspired to make FMLA a legislative priority. He believed that a bipartisan approach from the start was the key to success, so he collaborated with many Republicans, members and staff, including Stephanie Monroe. He also shared stories of crafting FMLA, such as walking through the halls of the House and Senate to whip support for the effort and working with both the Bush and Clinton administrations to enact the bipartisan bill into law.

Notably, the pair discussed how FMLA's eligibility criteria are the result of lengthy negotiations and compromises, showcasing the necessity of finding a middle ground to advance crucial, durable legislation. We also learned that a significant portion of FMLA's success can be traced back to the Children and Families Caucus, an initiative spearheaded by Senator Dodd to formulate the legislative framework. Senator Dodd emphasized the critical role played by Congressional Working Groups of like-minded members of Congress, highlighting their importance in fostering trust and enhancing understanding of both political and substantive issues. This approach proved instrumental in addressing problems collaboratively and even formed a strong enough consensus to overcome a presidential veto of FMLA.

Lessons Learned from the States

Date: March 28, 2023

Our second meeting was focused on understanding state paid family and medical leave programs. In the absence of a federal paid family leave policy, a growing number of states are enacting their own paid leave programs. Beginning with California in 2004, states have learned many lessons that can inform the development of federal paid leave policy. For this discussion, we welcomed a panel of program administrators and legislators from a variety of states to share their experiences in implementing and administering paid family leave programs.

Panelists:

- Rob Asaro-Angelo, Commissioner (New Jersey)
- Jill Gutierrez, Director of the New Jersey Office of Unemployment Insurance Modernization (New Jersey)
- Senator Karen Keiser, State Senator (Washington)
- Cami Feek, Commissioner of the Employment Security Department (Washington)
- Dr. Unique Morris-Hughes, Director of the Department of Employment Services (Washington, D.C.)
- Elliot Schreur, Former Chief of Policy of Office of Paid Family Leave (Washington, D.C.)
- Lisa Shepard (Massachusetts)
- Charles Arnowitz, Policy Advisor Office of the Governor (Colorado)
- Catherine A. Keane, Deputy Commissioner (New Hampshire)
- *Moderator*: Adrienne Schweer, Fellow, Bipartisan Policy Center

Panelists represented states with diverse histories of paid leave programs, including New Jersey (the second-longest-standing state program), Washington (a recently-implemented program that was enacted with bipartisan support), New Hampshire (a unique voluntary approach), and Colorado (slated to roll out a new program on Jan. 1, 2024).

An overarching concern echoed by the panelists was the need for federal legislation to be mindful of existing state infrastructure and foster collaboration instead of competition. Another consistent theme shared among panelists was the importance of financial stability in ensuring the sustainability of the program. In other words, it is vital that any new program is paid for.

Our panelists cautioned against expedited implementation without first establishing a solid financial foundation. They expressed that programs with strong financial footings at the onset facilitate smoother implementation and long-term durability, underscoring the importance of fiscal preparedness in any federal solution. Panelists also expressed the importance of bipartisan collaboration when enacting new programs, as bipartisan support in state legislatures was vital to the enactment of these programs. The collaborative efforts between Democrats and Republicans were celebrated as crucial building blocks in developing trust and buy-in for program implementation.

Our members valued this input, as we admire these state-leave initiatives in the absence of a federal paid leave solution and we seek solutions that work harmoniously with them.

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Washington's paid leave program is a primary example of what can happen when Democrats and Republicans join forces on these efforts for working families. We appreciated the chance to share what we've learned with the House Working Group and look forward to seeing how federal solutions take shape."

– Washington State Senator Karen Keiser

Insights from the Private Insurance Industry

In our third meeting, we partnered with the American Council of Life Insurers (ACLI) to welcome representatives of numerous insurance companies. The insurance industry plays a pivotal role in the provision of paid family and medical leave today. Insurance carriers offer short-term disability products in all U.S. states and territories. The insurance industry also provides paid family leave products in the eight states with voluntary private insurance laws and as private plan options in states with mandatory paid leave laws.

The purpose of the meeting was to gain deeper insights into the role that insurance carriers currently play in the broader landscape of paid leave and to explore what role the industry could play in federal paid family leave policy.

Date: April 18, 2023
Panelists:

- American Council of Life Insurers (ACLI)
- MetLife
- American Fidelity
- Principal Financial
- Unum

Notably, there is industry-wide consensus on the importance of paid family and medical leave. Insurance carriers expressed eagerness to continue developing a private market for these benefits and to collaborate with lawmakers to enact a federal solution. Panelists highlighted that properly incorporating the private insurance industry into federal policy is crucial. The insurance industry plays a major role in providing private benefits in states with mandatory systems and in establishing private paid family leave insurance markets in the states with voluntary systems. In numerous states, employers also often rely on insurance carriers to help them navigate various state paid leave laws and administer private paid leave benefits to their workforces.

Across many states, the insurance industry has already established a vital foundation for paid family leave. Utilizing the insurance industry to enable more companies to offer paid family leave through insurance products is one avenue in federal policy. This approach could stand to benefit both workers and businesses alike.

Perspectives of Small Business Leaders

Date: May 11, 2023

In May, our Working Group collaborated with Public Private Strategies (PPS) to gather input from small businesses. We welcomed small business leaders and owners from 11 diverse organizations for a meeting focused on the opportunities and challenges for expanding access to paid family leave benefits for their employees. In addition, we explored potential pathways forward for both small business owners and the self-employed.

Panelists:

- Talisha Bekavac, Executive Vice President, U.S. Black Chambers, Inc. (USBC)

- Ramiro Cavazos, President & CEO, United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC)

- Todd McCracken, President & CEO, National Small Business Association (NSBA)

- Eddie Monroy, Executive Director, NextGen Chamber of Commerce

- Elle Patout, National Director of Advocacy and Public Relations, National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO)

- Megan Patton, Board of Directors Member, NAWBO & Managing Partner, ODA Strategy

- Adrienne Schweer, Fellow, Bipartisan Policy Center (BPC)

- Chiling Tong, Chief Executive Officer & President, National ACE

- Baylee Anderson, Senior Associate, Public Private Strategies

- Katie Vlietstra Wonneberg, Principal, Public Private Strategies & Vice President for Government Relations and Public Affairs, National Association of the Self-Employed (NASE)

- Jeff Zubricki, Head of Etsy Americas Advocacy and Public Policy

The discussion revealed that small business owners want to provide paid leave to their workers. Small businesses recognize that paid family leave would level the playing field with large employers, helping them compete with larger employers to attract and retain workers. Moreover, drawing insights from the experiences of online marketplaces like Etsy, the discussion highlighted how government-supported solutions to expand access to paid leave can incentivize entrepreneurship by giving entrepreneurs themselves access to the benefit.

Although small business owners want to provide the benefit, they grapple with two primary challenges in doing so: cost and staffing. Panelists pointed out that the financial burden extends beyond covering the wages for an employee on leave to include replacement costs. A single worker can represent a large portion of a small business

employer's workforce, which can make their absence challenging for the company. Small employers face expenses associated with replacing a worker when they take family leave, including hiring temporary workers and retraining existing employees, among others.These challenges are exacerbated for smaller businesses as they often have limited human resources professionals or recruiting resources.

In light of these challenges, small business owners emphasize the importance of federal solutions that provide flexibility, including the option of opting out if necessary. The panelists emphasized the need to consider the practical constraints experienced by smaller entities. In turn, they encouraged our

members to craft policies that strike a balance between expanding access to paid family leave and the unique constraints that small businesses around the country face. Given the financial strain on small businesses, participants emphasized that the introduction or expansion of certain tax credits presents an opportunity to alleviate the costs associated with paid leave and enable more small businesses to provide the benefit. Any such tax credits, or expansions to the existing 45S tax credit,[xix] ought to be thoughtfully designed to address the unique challenges faced by small businesses to ensure that they effectively promote the provision of paid leave benefits.

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> For all of its challenges, the Covid-19 pandemic has proven to have rightfully accelerated discussion and possible action on a few public policy issues, one of those is paid leave. Efforts to tackle paid leave have provided a prime bipartisan opportunity for lawmakers. Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle and in both Chambers, have rightfully so, rolled up their sleeves to attempt to tackle this challenging issue. Today's roundtable with Small Business voices is yet another example of how committed this Working Group is to ensuring federal paid leave solutions intentionally consider small businesses in their implementation."
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> *– Katie Vlietstra Wonneberg, Principal, Public Private Strategies & Vice President for Government Relations and Public Affairs, National Association of the Self-Employed (NASE)*

Large Employers and the Paid Family Leave Landscape

Date: July 18, 2023

In a tight labor market, businesses are increasingly using paid leave benefits as a tool to attract and retain employees. Large employers, equipped with the financial means, often provide generous paid leave benefits to compete for talent, thereby expanding employee access nationwide. The focus of this discussion was twofold: (1) Exploring how a federal solution can preserve large employers' abilities to offer expansive paid leave benefits, and (2) understanding how the patchwork of state paid family leave laws places strains on large, multi-state employers.

Panelists:

- Ilyse Schuman, Senior Vice President, American Benefits Council
- Donald McIntosh, Vice President, Business Roundtable
- Susanna Samet, Managing Director for Policy and Government Relations, Deloitte
- Andrew Banducci, Senior Vice President, ERIC
- Dillon Clair, Director of State Advocacy and Litigation, ERIC
- Laura Bogan, Associate General Counsel, Home Depot
- Jason Kanter, Government and Regulatory Affairs Executive, IBM
- Evan Armstrong, Vice President, RILA
- Emily Dickens, Chief of Staff, SHRM
- Marc Freedman, Vice President, U.S. Chamber of Commerce
- *Moderator*: Ben Gitis, Associate Director, Bipartisan Policy Center

Panelists emphasized that, for large employers, the question is not whether they can provide family leave, but rather how a federal solution can assist them in navigating the complexities of administering benefits across the intricate landscape of 22 existing state laws. Notably, 14 of these laws impose mandates with significant variations on employers operating in their respective jurisdictions. Due to the lack of cohesion across these states, large employers encounter substantial challenges as they try to comply with different state laws, each with different standards regarding substantive benefits, eligibility, and administration.

Large companies stressed the importance of a federal solution that enables them to deliver consistent benefits to their entire workforce, regardless of their state of residence. A common preference among large employers is to establish a voluntary, national standard. Meeting this standard would then grant employers exemptions from diverse state requirements.

Regardless of the precise solution, simplifying and harmonizing the laws on the books would not only benefit large employers, but also their employees. Multi-state employers who provide generous paid leave would have enhanced operational efficiency, while their workers would be able to access the same benefit across the country. Such harmonization would also make paid family leave benefits easier for employees to understand and access.

"IBM understands the importance of providing equitable and user-friendly paid family and medical leave – regardless of an IBMer's geography. However, confusion and complexity across state paid leave programs don't allow businesses with employees in all 50 states to offer uniform, fair benefits to all workers. We appreciate the House Working Group's commitment to improving coordination and harmonization of paid leave benefits to improve access for states, employers, and employees."

– Jason Kanter, Government and Regulatory Affairs Executive, IBM

Caregiving and Paid Leave

Date: September 27, 2023

In recent years, the landscape of family caregiving in the U.S. has undergone significant transformation driven by demographic shifts, including an aging population, longer life expectancies, and changing family structures. As a result, many working-age adults struggle to balance caregiving needs for elderly family members, children, and often extended family members. With an increasing number of working-age adults taking on caregiving responsibilities, the aim of this meeting was to understand their needs and to explore how these complex realities can be effectively addressed in a federal paid family leave policy.

Panelists:

- Stephanie Monroe, Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access, UsAgainstAlzheimer's
- Nancy LeaMond, Executive Vice President and Chief Advocacy Engagement Officer, AARP
- Jelani Murrain, Director of Federal Relations at the American Cancer Society Action Network (ACS CAN)
- Katie Vlietstra Wonnenberg, Principal, Public Private Strategies Institute

Discussions in this briefing highlighted that paid family leave is an effective tool in supporting workers with caregiving responsibilities. Panelists shared how access to paid family leave provides a remedy for the uncertainties that many workers face when attending to their professional responsibilities while also providing essential care to family members that depend on them. By providing financial support and job security, paid family leave contributes to a more stable and resilient workforce.

Our discussion also centered on the essential need to understand that caregiving extends across a wide array of relationships including parents, children, spouses, and other adults. Furthermore, caregiving encompasses a variety of circumstances, ranging from permanent disabilities that require intermittent care to temporary situations demanding intensive support. As we develop federal policy, it is important to identify and address the diverse forms of caregiving that can benefit most from paid family leave.

"America's nearly 48 million family caregivers are the true unsung heroes of our nation's care system. In addition to the direct care they provide which is valued at $600 billion annually, this group of selfless individuals is the largest part of our healthcare system. Given that sixty-one percent of family caregivers work, we must find ways to enable them to meet both their family and work obligations. Ensuring access to Paid Leave is an important part of empowering family caregivers to meet the needs of their loved ones."

- Nancy LeaMond, Executive Vice President and Chief Advocacy Engagement Officer, AARP

Looking Ahead

As we conclude a productive year for paid family leave policy, marked by the launch of the groundbreaking bipartisan House Working Group, a series of enlightening briefings featuring diverse stakeholders, and sustained momentum towards a federal solution, our Working Group is excited about the future.

We eagerly anticipate the next chapter of our work, which will be dedicated to shaping policies that are responsive to the needs of American workers and businesses and improve the lives of American families.

Membership

Representative Chrissy Houlahan (D-PA), Co-Chair.

U.S. Representative Chrissy Houlahan is an Air Force veteran, engineer, entrepreneur, and educator who is continuing her career of service as the first woman ever to represent Pennsylvania's 6th District in Congress. Houlahan is the daughter and granddaughter of Holocaust survivors who came to America with nothing. She grew up in a military family; her parents met when her father and grandfather flew P3s in the same Navy squadron. She earned her engineering degree from Stanford with an ROTC scholarship that launched her service in the U.S. Air Force. Houlahan first became a mom while serving on active duty. She later earned her M.S. in Technology and Policy from MIT.

Houlahan has helped lead several thriving Southeastern Pennsylvania companies including AND1, a basketball apparel company headquartered in Paoli, and B Lab, the organization that launched the B Corporation movement. She went on to serve in Teach for America as a chemistry teacher at Simon Gratz High School in North Philadelphia, and then led and scaled a non-profit helping thousands of underserved students all across America build their literacy skills.

Currently in her third term, Houlahan sits on the House Armed Services Committee and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. Since serving her community in Congress, she has been awarded the Abraham Lincoln Leadership for America Award and three Congressional Management Foundation Democracy Awards. Chrissy and her husband Bart are celebrating their 34th anniversary together and have amazing grown daughters.

Representative Stephanie Bice (R-OK), Co-Chair.

Congresswoman Congresswoman Stephanie Bice is a fourth generation Oklahoman. She graduated from Oklahoma State University in 1995 with a degree in Marketing and a minor in International Business.

Before serving in the House of Representatives, Congresswoman Bice served in the Oklahoma State Senate for six years. During her tenure, she was Assistant Majority Floor Leader and Chair of the Senate Finance Committee.

Before her public service, Bice worked in the private sector for eight years in financial oversight, business strategy and marketing for her family's technology company. In addition, she ran her own marketing company, and later helped lead a boutique digital marketing agency as vice president of business development.

In the 117th Congress, Bice was elected by her peers to serve as Freshman Class President and serves as a member of the Republican Whip Team. She served on the House Armed Services Committee and the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

She currently serves as the Sophomore Class Representative to the Elected Leadership Committee for the 118th Congress. She serves on the House Appropriations Committee, the Committee on House Administration, the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology, and the House Budget Committee.

Stephanie and her husband Geoffrey have two daughters.

Representative Julia Letlow (R-LA).

Congresswoman Julia Letlow represents Louisiana's 5th Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives and is the state's first Republican woman elected to Congress. Julia took office in April 2021 after receiving 65 percent of the vote in a special election to win the seat previously won by her husband Luke, who passed away from complications of COVID-19 just days before taking office. She is the first woman to represent Louisiana in the House of Representatives in 30 years.

Julia serves on the House Committee on Appropriations, holding seats on the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration; Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education; and Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development. Julia also serves on the House Committee on Education and the Workforce.

A native of Monroe, Julia is a mother and professional in education who has dedicated her life to promote and advocate for higher education in Louisiana.

Julia graduated from the University of Louisiana Monroe (ULM), with a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts in speech communication. After completing her doctorate in communication from the University of South Florida, she returned to ULM as the ombudsperson and special projects coordinator for the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, where she contributed to the development of the university's strategic plan.

Julia served as the executive director of external affairs and strategic communications at ULM from 2018 to 2019 and prior served as the director of marketing and communications for the university. She previously served at the Tulane University School of Medicine in New

Orleans as the director of education, director of resident patient safety and quality improvement, and a clinical instructor of anesthesiology. She has also served as an instructor and teaching associate at ULM, Tulane University, and the University of South Florida.

Julia is raising her two young children in Start, Louisiana, and they worship at Covenant Presbyterian Church (EPC) in Monroe.

Representative Colin Allred (D-TX).

Born and raised in North Dallas by a single mom who was a Dallas public school teacher, Congressman Colin Allred was class president at Hillcrest High School and earned a full-ride football scholarship to Baylor University. Diploma in hand and prepared to attend law school, Colin deferred his acceptance to play in the NFL. He was a linebacker for five seasons before sustaining a career-ending injury that opened the door for him to fulfill his other dream -- becoming a civil rights attorney. Colin served in the General Counsel's office at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Colin later returned home to Dallas and decided to run for office to represent the district he grew up in. As a Representative, Colin is dedicated to helping North Texas families gain the same opportunities he had to fulfill his dreams. Colin's top priorities in Congress are working to lower health care costs, protecting Medicare and Social Security, and creating an economy that works for everyone. Colin is passionate about expanding access to vocational and trade schools and lowering the cost of college so all North Texans have the shot at a middle-class job. He believes Congress must find common ground to rebuild our aging roads and bridges, pass comprehensive immigration reform and take care of our veterans.

Representative Haley Stevens (D-MI).

Representative Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R-IA).

Congresswoman Haley Stevens grew up in Rochester Hills, Michigan, and graduated from Seaholm High School in Birmingham. She earned a master's degree in social policy and philosophy and a bachelor's degree in political science and philosophy from American University. Before being elected to Congress, Congresswoman Stevens served as the Chief of Staff to the U.S. Auto Rescue Task Force, the federal initiative responsible for saving General Motors, Chrysler, and 200,000 Michigan Jobs. She also played a key role in setting up the Office of Recovery for Automotive Communities and Workers, and the White House Office of Manufacturing Policy. After serving in the Obama Administration, Congresswoman Stevens worked in a manufacturing research lab focused on the future of work in the digital age.

Congresswoman Haley Stevens sits on the House Committees on Education and the Workforce and Science, Space & Technology, where she serves as the Ranking Member of the Research & Technology Subcommittee. In the 118th Congress, she was appointed to the new U.S. House Select Committee on Strategic Competition between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party. On these Committees, Congresswoman Stevens serves as the leading voice for Michigan's best-in-class manufacturers and workforce, increased investment in critical research and development, and solutions to address the real issues impacting kids in schools, including gun violence prevention, school nutrition, and full IDEA funding.

Congresswoman Stevens resides in Birmingham, Michigan, and is frequently seen walking through the many communities of her beloved Oakland

Mariannette's father was a Master Sergeant in the United States Air Force who was forced to take up extra work, sometimes two or three jobs, to support their family. Her mother, who did not have a high school education, also worked multiple jobs. Mariannette originally dreamed of becoming a teacher because she loved school and wanted to share her passion for learning with others. However, in 10th grade, she was severely burned in a kitchen fire. While at the hospital, Mariannette was treated by a physical therapist who went out of her way to make sure she got better. This woman's kindness and selflessness inspired her to become a doctor so she could help others.

Mariannette was the fourth of eight children and since her parents did not have the means to pay for college, she left home at 16 and enrolled in community college. She later enlisted in the United States Army at 18, where she served for 24 years as a private, nurse, and doctor (ophthalmologist or eye diseases/surgery.) She went into private practice in Ottumwa in 1997 and she has remained there with her husband, Curt.

Mariannette has two grown children, Jonathon and Taylor. In 2010, Governor Terry Branstad appointed her as the Director of the Iowa Department of Public Health where she served until 2014.

In 2018, the voters of Senate District 41 elected Mariannette to fight for them in the Iowa State Senate. She resigned from the state senate on January 2, 2021 to take her seat in the United States House of Representatives.

Mariannette is a member of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, where she sits on the Subcommittee on Health and the Subcommittee on Environment, Manufacturing, and Critical Minerals, as well as the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, where she serves as Chairwoman of the Subcommittee on Health.

Footnotes

[i] *Employee Benefits in the United States, March 2023 | U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*

[ii] *Reforming FMLA to Expand Employee Coverage and Reduce Employer Burdens | Bipartisan Policy Center*

[iii] *Family and Medical Leave in 2012: Technical Report | U.S. Department of Labor*

[iv] *Employment Characteristics of Families – 2022 | U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*

[v] *Employment Characteristics of Families – 2010 | U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*

[vi] *More than 1 in 6 Americans Now 65 or Older as U.S. Continues Graying | The Washington Post*

[vii] *The Economics Daily | U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*

[viii] *Caregiving Statistics: A Data Portrait of Family Caregiving in 2023 | A Place for MomLifetime Employment-Related Costs to Women of Providing Family Care | Urban Institute*

[x] *Barriers to Work: A Recent BPC – Artemis Survey of Non-working Americans and the Need for Paid Family and Medical Leave | Bipartisan Policy Center*

[xi] *The World "Has Found a Way to Do This": The U.S. Lags on Paid Leave | The New York Times*

[xii] *Paid Leave for Personal Illness: A Detailed Look at Approaches Across OECD Countries | World Policy Analysis Center*

[xiii] *Additional Leave Entitlements for Working Parents | OECD*

[xiv] *Paid Family Leave Across OECD Countries | Bipartisan Policy Center*

[xv] *Barriers to Work: A Recent BPC – Artemis Survey of Non-working Americans and the Need for Paid Family and Medical Leave | Bipartisan Policy Center*

[xvi] *Creating and Using New Data Sources to Analyze the Relationship Between Social Policy and Global Health: The Case of Maternal Leave | Public Health Support*

[xvii] *Paid Family Leave Boosted Postpartum Wellbeing, Breastfeeding Rates | Northwestern University*

[xviii] *This is Your Brain on Fatherhood: Dads Experience Hormonal Changes too, Research Shows | NBC News*

[xix] *Section 45S Employer Credit for Paid Family and Medical Leave FAQs | Internal Revue Service*