

## Washington Family Leave Coalition: Campaign 2007 Update

April 23, 2007

Dear Friends:

### **PAID FAMILY LEAVE PASSES!** **Washington to Become the Second State in the Nation** **with Paid Parental Leave**

Congratulations and thank you for the thousands of emails and phone calls you made to Legislators and the Governor. You really made a difference.

The whole Family Leave Coalition worked as a team to achieve this victory. Special thanks and congratulations to our legislative champions for their leadership, collaboration, and dedication, bill sponsors Sen. Karen Keiser and Rep. Mary Lou Dickerson, Senate Majority Leader Lisa Brown, committee chairs Rep. Conway and Sen. Kohl-Welles, and Rep. Tami Green, chair of the Working Families Caucus.

### **DOWN TO THE WIRE**

Despite intense opposition by business organizations, the Senate passed Paid Family Leave on Sunday, April 22, 2007, the last day of the session. The Governor has 20 days to sign SB 5659 into law.

### **WASHINGTON PAID FAMILY LEAVE PROGRAM** **(See the attached Washington Family Leave Program Fact Sheet)** **SB 5659 Family Leave Insurance**

As adopted, SB 5659 provides for up to 5 weeks of paid leave to care for a newborn or newly adopted child. Benefits would be \$250 per week with a one-week waiting period, pro-rated for part-time. All workers who work 680 hours in previous year are eligible regardless of company size. Workers in companies with more than 25 employees would also have job protection. Benefits will begin in October 2009.

During the session, the bill was amended in the Senate and the House. It no longer covers the care of a seriously ill family member or a worker's own illness. Funding for the program is temporarily loaned from the supplemental pension fund, with a taskforce to recommend permanent funding options by the end of this year.

We have succeeded in passing ground-breaking legislation. The Family Leave Coalition will work closely with the taskforce and implementing agency to get family leave off to a good start. We'll also continue to work toward our vision of a society where no one has to choose between being a good family member and a good employee.

### **View the bill (SB 5659) that was delivered to the Governor**

<http://www.leg.wa.gov/pub/billinfo/2007-08/Pdf/Bills/Senate%20Passed%20Legislature/5659-S2.PL.pdf>