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At a Glance: The New York State Paid Family Leave Act

The Paid Family Leave Act (A. 3870 / S. 3004) will provide workers in New York State with up to 12 weeks of paid leave a year to bond with a new child, care for a seriously ill family member, or address certain issues arising from a family member's military service.

• **Paid family leave (PFL) will make it easier for parents—both mothers and fathers—to care for newborn or newly adopted children without undue financial hardship.**

• **PFL will provide crucial support when a family member becomes seriously ill.** PFL will be available to care for a seriously ill child, spouse, domestic partner, parent, grandchild, grandparent, sibling, or the parent of a spouse or partner.

• **PFL will help military families during times of need.** Workers will be able to use PFL to address certain legal, financial, and childcare issues related to the military service of a spouse, domestic partner, child, or parent.

• **PFL will not create new administrative requirements on business.** PFL will become a part of the Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) program that has been in place in New York since 1950. Therefore, implementation of the PFL program will create no administrative changes for businesses, allowing businesses to use whatever mechanism they currently use to comply with TDI requirements.

• **The proposed legislation will provide meaningful financial security to working families.** Workers will receive two-thirds of their average weekly wage while taking PFL, up to a maximum benefit level. This maximum benefit level will be raised in steps over four years until it equals 50% of the statewide average weekly wage. The proposed bill will also modernize New York's TDI system by raising the TDI benefit level for the first time in more than 25 years.

• **Employers' payroll costs will not be affected by PFL.** The weekly PFL benefit will be financed solely through employee payroll deductions of up to 45 cents a week in the first year. In subsequent years, New York's Superintendent of Financial Services will determine the amount of employee contributions based on the cost per worker of providing PFL through the state insurance fund. The cost of raising the TDI benefit level will continue to be shared, as in the current TDI program, by both workers and employers.

• **A PFL program will save employers money.** PFL will benefit employers by lowering turnover, boosting productivity, and enhancing employee morale. PFL will not interfere with businesses that already provide paid family leave and will help to offset existing costs. As in the TDI program, employers will be able to provide PFL through the state insurance fund, or they may provide benefits through a private insurer or as a self-insurer and receive reimbursement for some of their costs.

• **PFL will help to make small businesses more competitive.** PFL will ensure that all workers can receive paid family leave regardless of the size of their company. Small businesses often cannot afford to provide the same paid leave benefits as larger companies, and they lose valuable workers as a result.

• **Employers can require notice and proof of the need for leave.** The proposed PFL program will provide for written notice and proof requirements related to a worker's need to take leave.

• **Workers will be protected when they take PFL.** Workers will have job protection during their leave, ensuring they can use their PFL benefits without fear of discrimination or job loss.

• **PFL has proven successful in other states.** California, New Jersey, and Rhode Island have successfully integrated PFL into their TDI programs. PFL is substantially benefitting workers and businesses in those three states.

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