

Statement for the Record
United States Senate Committee on Finance
“Exploring Paid Leave: Policy, Practice, and Impact on the Workforce”
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The signed organizations commend the Senate Committee on Finance for holding the hearing titled, *Exploring Paid Leave: Policy, Practice, and Impact on the Workforce*. Paid leave is necessary for survivors of violence, just as it is for all workers. However, survivors of violence have additional, critical needs. As the Committee explores paid leave, we urge you to include paid safe leave to take time away from work to seek services or safety for workers who are, or whose family members are, victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, trafficking, or other forms of gender-based violence and/or harassment.

Millions of workers experience domestic violence, sexual assault, trafficking, stalking, sexual harassment, and other forms of violence every day.¹ Millions more are supporting family members, grieving the loss of a loved one, or seeking healing and safety due to violence.² In 2016, nearly half of all women, and four out of ten men reported experiencing domestic violence in their lifetime.³ Across the country, Americans experience rape, trafficking, gun

¹ Logan, T. K., Lisa Shannon, Jennifer Cole, and Jennifer Swanberg. “Partner Stalking and Implications for Women’s Employment.” *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 22, no. 3 (March 1, 2007): 268–91. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260506295380>.

² See Schumacher, Shannon, Marley Presiado, Isabelle Valdes, and 2023. “Americans’ Experiences With Gun-Related Violence, Injuries, And Deaths.” *KFF* (blog). Accessed September 14, 2023. <https://www.kff.org/other/poll-finding/americans-experiences-with-gun-related-violence-injuries-and-deaths/>.

³ Kathleen C. Basile, Ashley S. D’Inverno, and Jing Wang, “National Prevalence of Sexual Violence by a Workplace-Related Perpetrator,” *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 58, no. 2 (February 2020): 216–23, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2019.09.011>; K. C. Basile et al., “The National Intimate Partner and Sexual

violence or other forms of violent victimization, at a rate of 23.5 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or older.⁴ This violence impacts every workplace, every industry and nearly every American family.

Definition of Safe Leave

“Safe leave” generally refers to paid time away from work that a worker may use to address impacts of abuse and the needs that a worker may need to address because of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, trafficking, other forms of gender-based violence or harassment, or other forms of violent victimization. As survivors of violence navigate their lives, they sometimes need time off of work to keep themselves and their families safe and secure.

Survivors might need to take time away from work for a wide variety of reasons connected to the violence they have experienced.⁵ For example, survivors may need time for legal proceedings to seek safety for themselves and their families, such as to get a restraining order, file for separation/divorce and child custody, or participate in criminal proceedings. They may also need to seek supportive services, enroll their children in a new school, find child care, or move to a new home for safety reasons. Survivors may have needs related to their physical or mental health which are not fully addressed by other kinds of leave. In many cases, these needs may be extremely urgent or only possible to address during working hours. Violence often co-occurs alongside other needs, such as medical conditions, meaning that existing laws do not offer survivors sufficient time to heal.⁶

In addition, people close to survivors may need to leave to support their loved ones, providing critically needed, and often unscheduled, assistance. A close friend might accompany a sexual assault survivor to obtain emergency health care⁷ or assist with moving to a safer home. A family member may be called to provide a victim impact statement in a legal proceeding or to care for a survivor’s children while the survivor is getting needed assistance. In tragic cases where a victim is killed in a violent act, a loved one reeling from unexpected violent loss may need time to make funeral arrangements and grieve, and take other safety-related measures where there is an ongoing threat.

Current Access to Safe Leave

Unfortunately, many Americans do not have access to any paid time off from work, let alone paid safe time or paid sick time, even to recover from violence. As of March 2023, 78 percent of all private sector workers had access to paid sick leave—in other words, more than one in

Violence Survey: 2016/2017 Report on Sexual Violence,” *Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, 2022.

⁴ See Thompson, Alexandra. “Criminal Victimization, 2022.” NCJ 307089. Washington (DC): Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2022. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/document/cv22.pdf>.

⁵ See Swanberg, Jennifer E., Mamta U. Ojha, and Caroline Macke. “State Employment Protection Statutes for Victims of Domestic Violence: Public Policy’s Response to Domestic Violence as an Employment Matter.” *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 27, no. 3 (February 1, 2012): 587–619. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260511421668>.

⁶ See William, Jananie, Bronwyn Loong, Dana Hanna, Bonny Parkinson, and Deborah Loxton. “Lifetime Health Costs of Intimate Partner Violence: A Prospective Longitudinal Cohort Study with Linked Data for out-of-Hospital and Pharmaceutical Costs.” *Economic Modelling* 116 (November 1, 2022): 106013. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econmod.2022.106013>.

⁷ See Alliance for Safety and Justice. “Crime Survivors Speak: National Survey Of Victims’ Views On Safety and Justice.” *Crime Survivors Speak*. Alliance For Safety and Justice, September 2022. <https://allianceforsafetyandjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Alliance-for-Safety-and-Justice-Crime-Survivors-Speak-September-2022.pdf>.

five workers are excluded.⁸ Among part-time workers, half had no paid sick leave. Among the lowest-paid ten percent of private sector workers, more than 60 percent had no access to paid sick leave.⁹ Low-income and part-time workers are also disproportionately likely to lack access to paid vacation time or other sources of paid time off, meaning that many vulnerable workers may have no paid time off at all. Moreover, even where workers have access to paid sick leave or other forms of paid time off, they may not be able to use it to address all their needs in relation to violence, particularly for non-medical needs.

A growing number of workers have access to job-guaranteed safe time, but most do not have the full range of protections they need. At the federal level, Executive Order 1370634, issued by President Obama, ensures the right to paid sick and safe leave for many employees of federal contractors.¹⁰ **However, no federal law guarantees the right to paid safe leave for any other employees.**

Eighteen states and the District of Columbia guarantee a right to *paid* time away from work that can be used for safe leave purposes. Fifteen states and the District of Columbia provide explicit paid safe leave protections under their state paid sick time laws, though exact coverage varies by state.¹¹ These laws guarantee covered employees the right to earn and use paid time off based on how much they work, typically up to around 40 hours per year.¹² In addition, Maine, Nevada, and most recently Illinois have passed laws allowing covered employees to earn and use a limited amount of paid time off for any purpose, which can include safe leave needs.¹³ For more extended needs, five states provide or will provide paid safe leave protections for some survivors through their state paid family and medical leave laws, which provide benefits for up to several weeks through social insurance systems.¹⁴ One state, Maine, will provide safe leave for survivors of a broader range of violence through their new paid family and medical leave law.¹⁵ Note that all six of these states also have paid sick time or paid time off laws, such that workers in those states have additional important protections. **These states provide an example of how to include survivors of violence in a broader ecosystem of workplace protections.**

Beyond these laws, some states have laws that guarantee the right to *unpaid* leave in connection with various forms of violence. These protections are critical but are all too often

⁸ Bureau of Labor Statistics. “Table 6. Selected Paid Leave Benefits: Access - 2023 A01 Results.” Accessed September 26, 2023. <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/ebs2.t06.htm>.

⁹ Bureau of Labor Statistics. “Table 6. Selected Paid Leave Benefits: Access - 2023 A01 Results.” Accessed September 26, 2023. <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/ebs2.t06.htm>.

¹⁰ See U.S. Department of Labor. “Executive Order 13706, Establishing Paid Sick Leave for Federal Contractors.” Accessed January 24, 2023. <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/government-contracts/sick-leave>.

¹¹ Those states are Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington State. Minnesota’s paid sick time law will go into effect on January 1, 2024; all other laws are fully in effect. For more detail, please see A Better Balance. “Overview of Paid Sick Time Laws in the United States.” A Better Balance, 2023. <https://www.abetterbalance.org/paid-sick-time-laws/?export>.

¹² A Better Balance. “Overview of Paid Sick Time Laws in the United States.” A Better Balance, 2023. <https://www.abetterbalance.org/paid-sick-time-laws/?export>.

¹³ A Better Balance. “Overview of Paid Sick Time Laws in the United States.” A Better Balance, 2023. <https://www.abetterbalance.org/paid-sick-time-laws/?export>.

¹⁴ New Jersey, Connecticut, and Oregon are already providing paid family and medical leave benefits, including for safe time. Benefits will begin in 2024 in Colorado and in 2026 in Minnesota. Please see pages 3 through 5 of National Partnership for Women and Families. “State Paid Family & Medical Leave Insurance Laws.” Chart. Washington D.C.: National Partnership, September 2023.

<https://nationalpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/state-paid-family-leave-laws.pdf>.

¹⁵ 26 M.R.S. § 850-A(26). Benefits will begin in 2026 in Maine.

out of reach for those who cannot afford to go without a paycheck, especially at particularly difficult or vulnerable moments.¹⁶ Some states only offer unpaid safe leave for survivors of specific crimes, usually domestic violence and sexual assault. And, many of these laws narrowly define violence or require specific “certifications” or proof of violence from law enforcement agencies.¹⁷ The requirement to report to law enforcement to qualify creates barriers, as many survivors of crime do not report to police.¹⁸ Nearly 6 in 10 violent victimizations are never reported to law enforcement.¹⁹ Reporting rates are especially stark when it comes to sexual violence – nearly 8 in 10 sexual assaults are not reported to law enforcement.²⁰ Most states also have laws guaranteeing some form of unpaid leave or job protection for crime victims or witnesses, but these laws are often limited to very specific actions in relation to the criminal legal system, such as responding to a subpoena.²¹ And 15 states do not even guarantee unpaid leave for any crime victims.²²

The result is an incomplete and inadequate set of protections, despite important gains in recent years. Even where they have protections, many survivors are unaware of the availability of paid or unpaid safe leave until it is too late to meaningfully exercise that right.²³ Thus, the millions of workers whose lives are touched by violence each year in the

¹⁶ See generally FreeFrom. “Support Every Survivor.” Los Angeles, CA: FreeFrom, 2023.

<https://www.freefrom.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Support-Every-Survivor-PDF.pdf>.

¹⁷ Legal Momentum, and Futures Without Violence. “State Guide on Employment Rights for Survivors of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking.” Washington D.C.: Workplaces Respond National Resource Center, November 2022.

<https://www.workplacesrespond.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/State-Employment-Guide.pdf>.

¹⁸ See Espinoza, Lucas Enrique, Luis Enrique Espinoza, Rosalva Resendiz, Noe Leal, Jennifer L. Talleff, Zoraya Berlanga Aguilar, Rebecca Rouse, and Kathleen Ayako Anangwe. “Intimate Partner Violence Incidents Reporting by Female Minorities in the United States.” *Journal of Ethnicity in Criminal Justice* 20, no. 3 (July 3, 2022): 209–26. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15377938.2022.2096735>; Lonsway, Kimberly A., and Joanne Archambault. “The ‘Justice Gap’ for Sexual Assault Cases: Future Directions for Research and Reform.” *Violence Against Women* 18, no. 2 (February 1, 2012): 145–68.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801212440017>;Lapsey, David S., Bradley A. Campbell, and Bryant T. Plumlee.

“Focal Concerns and Police Decision Making in Sexual Assault Cases: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis.” *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse* 23, no. 4 (October 1, 2022): 1220–34.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838021991285>.

¹⁹ Thompson, A. and Tapp, S.N. (2023). “Criminal Victimization, 2022.” US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics.

²⁰ See Thompson, A. and Tapp, S.N. (2023). “Criminal Victimization, 2022.” US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics.

²¹ See Legal Momentum, and Futures Without Violence. “State Guide on Employment Rights for Survivors of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking.” Washington D.C.: Workplaces Respond National Resource Center, November 2022.

<https://www.workplacesrespond.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/State-Employment-Guide.pdf>.

²²As of November 2022, states with no guaranteed leave for crime victims include Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Nebraska, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, West Virginia and the US Virgin Islands. Some of these states, such as North Carolina and North Dakota, do have limited GBV Safe Leave, but this leave does not cover all crime victims. The states that have no GBV Safe Leave to address domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking include; Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Delaware, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming and the US Virgin Islands. Survivors in some of those states may be able to use crime victim leave but this access often requires legal documentation. For detailed information on state specific statutes please see; Legal Momentum, and Futures Without Violence “State Guide on Employment Rights for Survivors of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking.” Washington D.C.: Workplaces Respond National Resource Center, November 2022.

<https://www.workplacesrespond.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/State-Employment-Guide.pdf>.

²³ See generally; Swanberg, Jennifer E., Mamta U. Ojha, and Caroline Macke. “State Employment Protection Statutes for Victims of Domestic Violence: Public Policy’s Response to Domestic Violence as an Employment

U.S. are forced to make impossible choices between employment and safety and recovery from violence. **This is why all American families deserve access to safe leave.**

The Lack of Safe Leave Harms Families

Experiencing violence can mean missing work.²⁴ Without paid safe leave, it also means missing a paycheck or losing a job. Across the board, those who experience sexual and domestic violence, stalking, and other forms of harassment and violence miss work and lose their jobs as a consequence of their experiences. Many survivors report being demoted or even losing their jobs as a result of absences due to violence and harassment.²⁵ A 2020 survey found that 76 percent of survivors of domestic violence said that their partners made it hard to keep a job.²⁶ A 2022 survey of survivors of crime found that one-third reported difficulty with school or work as a direct result of their victimization.²⁷ One in six survivors of violence lost a job or were demoted due to needing time off work. Another study found that victims who were stalked lost an average of 10.1 days of paid work per year, those who were raped lost an average of 8.1 days per year, and those who experienced physical violence lost 7.2 days per year.²⁸ Some of those absences may be paid, but many are not, depriving workers of the income they need to support themselves and their families. Paid safe leave will keep survivors in the workforce while limiting the economic harms of abuse.²⁹

Economic Insecurity Endangers Survivors and Community Safety

A primary reason domestic violence survivors are unable to leave an abusive relationship is a lack of economic security to support themselves.³⁰ Compounding this, deepening economic insecurity increases vulnerability to violence and makes it more difficult to leave a violent relationship.³¹ Survivors of violence are often caught between two barriers; they need work to be able to leave a violent situation but the violence they're subjected to severely impacts their

Matter.” *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 27, no. 3 (2012): 587–619.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260511421668>.

²⁴ According to a forthcoming analysis by the Alliance for Safety and Justice of data from the National Crime Victimization Survey, 190,000 people report missing work each year after experiencing a direct physical attack. These include survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, gun violence, robbery, and other assaults. This figure does not capture the many thousands more who miss work when a loved one is victimized or killed, and does not fully capture the impact of harm such as stalking or intimate partner violence.

²⁵ Showalter, K., & McCloskey, R. J. (2021). A Qualitative Study Of Intimate Partner Violence And Employment Instability. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 36(23–24), NP12730–NP12755.

²⁶ CSAJ, Adrienne E. Adams, and Sara Wee. “Domestic Violence And Economic Well-Being Study.” SERVICE PROVIDER REPORT. Center for Survivor Agency and Justice, n.d.

https://csaj.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/DV__EWB_Study-Service_Provider_Report_FINAL.pdf

²⁷ See Alliance for Safety and Justice. “Crime Survivors Speak: National Survey Of Victims’ Views On Safety and Justice.” Crime Survivors Speak. Alliance For Safety and Justice, September 2022.

<https://allianceforsafetyandjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Alliance-for-Safety-and-Justice-Crime-Survivors-Speak-September-2022.pdf>.

²⁸ See Gladys McLean and Sarah Gonzalez Bocinski, “The Economic Cost of Intimate Partner Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking,” IWPR 2020 (blog), August 14, 2017,

<https://iwpr.org/iwpr-general/the-economic-cost-of-intimate-partner-violence-sexual-assault-and-stalking>.

²⁹ Moe, Angela M., and Myrtle P. Bell. “Abject Economics: The Effects of Battering and Violence on Women’s Work and Employability.” *Violence Against Women* 10, no. 1 (January 1, 2004): 29–55.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801203256016>.

³⁰ See Cynthia Hess and Alona Del Rosario, “Dreams Deferred: A Survey on the Impact of Intimate Partner Violence on Survivors’ Education, Careers, and Economic Security” (Washington, D.C.: Institute for Women’s Policy Research, 2018),

https://iwpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/C475_IWPR-Report-Dreams-Deferred.pdf.

³¹ See Heron, Rebecca L., Maarten Eisma, and Kevin Browne. “Why Do Female Domestic Violence Victims Remain in or Leave Abusive Relationships? A Qualitative Study.” *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma* 31, no. 5 (May 28, 2022): 677–94. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10926771.2021.2019154>.

ability to work. The consequences of violence compromise economic security—and with it, safety.

Life stressors like job insecurity are among the factors that can increase a survivor's risk of developing PTSD, and can have lasting impacts on employment and housing stability for people who have experienced violent victimization.³² According to a 2022 survey, more than 9 in 10 people with an arrest or conviction record have been a victim or a crime, compared to less than half of people (44%) who do not have a record.³³ Eighty-six percent of incarcerated women were victims of violence prior to incarceration.³⁴ Experiencing violence is also a central risk factor for chronic homelessness and substance-use disorder.³⁵ These effects are not limited to the survivor but also impact community safety. One study found that more than half (59%) of mass shootings between 2014 and 2019 were related to domestic violence, where at least one of the victims was a partner or family member of the shooter.³⁶ **Thus, providing survivors of violence with adequate time to heal and get to safety is violence prevention and a way to make us all safer.**³⁷

Paid Safe Leave Can Make Justice a Meaningful Choice

The economic impacts of violence also affect a survivor's ability to meaningfully pursue their versions of justice and accountability. Researchers have found that job loss and economic pressure are the primary reasons survivors of violence decline to pursue protection orders and other safety measures.³⁸ Safe leave promotes consistency and participation in the legal system, giving survivors further options for justice.³⁹ As 15 states do not guarantee unpaid leave for any crime victims, many survivors are forced to choose between working and

³² See Kelly, Vanessa G., Gregory S. Merrill, Martha Shumway, Jennifer Alvidrez, and Alicia Boccellari. "Outreach, Engagement, and Practical Assistance: Essential Aspects of PTSD Care for Urban Victims of Violent Crime." *Trauma, Violence & Abuse* 11, no. 3 (July 2010): 144–56. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838010374481>.

³³ See Alliance for Safety and Justice (2022). "Voices of Redemption: A Survey of People with Records." <https://asj.allianceforsafetyandjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/2023-05-15-2023-TimeDoneSurvey-Full.pdf>

³⁴ See Vera Institute of Justice. "Overlooked: Women and Jails in an Era of Reform," July 7, 2018. <https://www.vera.org/publications/overlooked-women-and-jails-report>

³⁵ See Baker, Charlene K., Kris A. Billhardt, Joseph Warren, Chiquita Rollins, and Nancy E. Glass. "Domestic Violence, Housing Instability, and Homelessness: A Review of Housing Policies and Program Practices for Meeting the Needs of Survivors." *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 15, no. 6 (November 1, 2010): 430–39. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2010.07.005>; Pallatino, Chelsea, Judy C. Chang, and Elizabeth E. Krans. "The Intersection of Intimate Partner Violence and Substance Use among Women with Opioid Use Disorder."

Substance Abuse 42, no. 2 (April 1, 2021): 197–204. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08897077.2019.1671296>.

³⁶ See Geller, Lisa B., Marisa Booty, and Cassandra K. Crifasi. "The Role of Domestic Violence in Fatal Mass Shootings in the United States, 2014–2019." *Injury Epidemiology* 8, no. 1 (May 31, 2021): 38. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40621-021-00330-0>.

³⁷ See Rowhani-Rahbar, Ali, Julia P. Schleimer, Caitlin A. Moe, Frederick P. Rivara, and Heather D. Hill. "Income Support Policies and Firearm Violence Prevention: A Scoping Review." *Preventive Medicine, Epidemiology and Prevention of Gun Violence*, 165 (December 1, 2022): 107133. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ypmed.2022.107133>; Tankard, Margaret E., and Radha Iyengar. "Economic Policies and Intimate Partner Violence Prevention: Emerging Complexities in the Literature." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 33, no. 21 (November 1, 2018): 3367–87. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260518798354>.

³⁸ Ann Malecha et al., "Applying for and Dropping a Protection Order: A Study with 150 Women," *Criminal Justice Policy Review* 14, no. 4 (December 1, 2003): 486–504, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0887403403255496>.

³⁹ De La Rue, Lisa, Lilyana Ortega, and Gena Castro Rodriguez. "System-Based Victim Advocates Identify Resources and Barriers to Supporting Crime Victims." *International Review of Victimology* 29, no. 1 (January 1, 2023): 16–26. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02697580221088340>; Heffernan, Liz. "The Participation of Victims in the Trial Process." *Northern Ireland Legal Quarterly* 68 (2017): 491.

participating in the justice process.⁴⁰ Ensuring the survivors of crime can actually attend court will save the courts and criminal legal system resources lost due to rescheduled hearings and dismissed cases. Furthermore, by facilitating the logistics of participating in the justice system, paid safe leave gives survivors a meaningful choice.

Paid Leave Advances Equity in the Workforce

Some communities, such as American Indian or Alaska Native women, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ people, experience disproportionate rates of violence, which can make it harder for these populations to obtain and maintain employment or education.⁴¹

Experiencing violence often forces survivors into part-time or low-wage work.⁴² Workers in low-wage jobs, including undocumented immigrants, women, and people of color – some the same workers who face higher risks of experiencing violence and greatest barriers to accessing help⁴³ – are less likely to have access to paid time away from work.⁴⁴ Paid safe leave will support our economies' most vulnerable workers, advancing economic equity and decreasing future risk of violence.

Paid Safe Leave Is Good for Business and the Economy

Ensuring that survivors of violence have access to safety and healing also has widespread benefits for the entire economy. Paid leave will support businesses and the economy by reducing lost productivity and the costs of increased turnover.⁴⁵ Violence creates various barriers to successfully applying for work, keeping a job, or completing an education or

⁴⁰As of November 2022, states with no guaranteed leave for crime victims include Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Nebraska, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, West Virginia and the US Virgin Islands. Some of these states, such as North Carolina and North Dakota, do have limited GBV Safe Leave, but this leave does not cover all crime victims. The states that have no GBV Safe Leave to address domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking include; Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Delaware, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming and the US Virgin Islands. Survivors in some of those states may be able to use crime victim leave but this access often requires legal documentation. For detailed information on state specific statutes please see; Legal Momentum, and Futures Without Violence “State Guide on Employment Rights for Survivors of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking.” Washington D.C.: Workplaces Respond National Resource Center, November 2022. <https://www.workplacesrespond.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/State-Employment-Guide.pdf>.

⁴¹ See “Intimate Partner Violence and Sexual Abuse Among LGBT People.” Williams Institute. Accessed February 10, 2023. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/ipv-sex-abuse-lgbt-people/>; Fedina, Lisa, Yuliya Shyrokonis, Bethany Backes, Katie Schultz, Louise Ashwell, Steven Hafner, and Andre Rosay. “Intimate Partner Violence, Economic Insecurity, and Health Outcomes Among American Indian and Alaska Native Men and Women: Findings From a National Sample.” *Violence Against Women* 29, no. 11 (September 1, 2023): 2060–79. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10778012221127725>.

⁴² See Tolman, Richard M., and Hui-Chen Wang. “Domestic Violence and Women’s Employment: Fixed Effects Models of Three Waves of Women’s Employment Study Data.” *American Journal of Community Psychology* 36, no. 1/2 (2005): 147–58. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-005-6239-0>.

⁴³ See Smith, N. and Hope, C. (2020). “Helping Those Who Help Others: Key Findings From a Comprehensive Needs Assessment of the Crime Victims Field.” The National Resource Center for Reaching Victims.

⁴⁴ See Boyens, Chantel, Michael Karpman, and Jack Smalligan. “Access to Paid Leave Is Lowest among Workers with the Greatest Needs,” July 2022, 17

⁴⁵ See Swanberg, Jennifer E., T. K. Logan, and Caroline Macke. “Intimate Partner Violence, Employment, and the Workforce: Consequences and Future Decisions.” *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse* 4, no. 10 (2005): 1–26; Kathryn Showalter, “Women’s Employment and Domestic Violence: A Review of the Literature,” *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 31 (November 2016): 37–47, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2016.06.017>.

training program.⁴⁶ This leaves many qualified and hardworking survivors out of the workforce entirely.

Furthermore, every year an estimated eight million days of paid work are lost by survivors of intimate partner violence, approximately 32,114 full-time jobs.⁴⁷ This has consequences not only for survivors and their families but for our economy as a whole. A 2017 study estimated that rape alone cost the U.S. economy more than \$1.6 trillion in lost productivity.⁴⁸ By creating pathways to remain in the workforce and adequately support survivors of violence, the American economy will reduce lost productivity and retain talented and innovative workers.

Paid Leave Will Support Child Well-Being

Paid safe leave addresses two critical factors in child health and well-being; exposure to violence and economic insecurity.^{49,50} Research indicates that parents experiencing intimate partner violence (IPV) often recognize and are concerned about the potentially harmful effects of the violence on their children, and consider their children in making decisions about help-seeking.⁵¹ However, economic insecurity is a central challenge for survivors of violence, particularly those with children.⁵² Paid safe leave will increase the economic security of survivors of violence, allowing them to heal from violence, alongside their children.⁵³

Conclusion

Paid safe leave gives survivors of violence options; ways to navigate safety, time to maintain their economic security, and the chance to find healing. One of the measures American families across the country need to manage their safety, care for their families, and remain in the workforce is paid safe leave. Survivors, who have already faced immense trauma, should not be forced to make a choice between personal and family well-being or financial stability.

⁴⁶ See generally Andrea Borchers et al., “Employment Maintenance and Intimate Partner Violence,” *Workplace Health & Safety*, May 18, 2016, 2165079916644008, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2165079916644008>.

⁴⁷ See generally Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. *Costs of Intimate Partner Violence against Women in the United States*. Atlanta (GA): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2003. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/ipvbook-a.pdf>.

⁴⁸ See Peterson, Cora, Sarah DeGue, Curtis Florence, and Colby N. Lokey. “Lifetime Economic Burden of Rape Among U.S. Adults.” *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 52, no. 6 (June 2017): 691–701. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2016.11.014>.

⁴⁹ See Prickett, Kate C. “Mothers’ Job Loss and Their Sensitivity to Young Children’s Development.” *Child Development* 91, no. 6 (November 2020): 1970–87. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.13398>.

⁵⁰ See Waldfogel, Jane, Terry-Ann Craigie, and Jeanne Brooks-Gunn. “Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing.” *The Future of Children / Center for the Future of Children, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation* 20, no. 2 (2010): 87–112.

⁵¹ See generally Rhodes, Karin Verlaine, Melissa E. Dichter, Catherine L. Kothari, Steven C. Marcus, and Catherine Cerulli. “The Impact of Children on Legal Actions Taken by Women Victims of Intimate Partner Violence.” *Journal of Family Violence* 26, no. 5 (July 1, 2011): 355–64. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-011-9370-8>.

⁵² See Conrad-Hiebner, Aislinn, and Elizabeth Byram. “The Temporal Impact of Economic Insecurity on Child Maltreatment: A Systematic Review.” *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse* 21, no. 1 (January 1, 2020): 157–78. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838018756122>.

⁵³ See “Intimate Partner Violence and Women’s Economic Security | Office of Justice Programs.” Accessed September 18, 2023.

<https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/intimate-partner-violence-and-womens-economic-security>.

As the Committee explores policies, practices, and the impact of paid leave on the workforce, we urge its members to include paid safe leave for survivors of violence. We urge the explicit and specific inclusion of survivors of violence in current or future proposed legislation of paid leave. Survivors of violence can be included in broader legislation on paid leave for all workers or standalone legislation specifically for survivors of violence. Safe leave should cover leave to address the impacts of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, family violence, sexual harassment, trafficking, other forms of gender-based violence or harassment, or another qualifying act of violence if the time is for the individual or individual's family member as described above. Future paid leave legislation should include as permissible reasons for taking the leave the various reasons survivors of violence need safe leave and integrate multiple methods of certification of qualifying needs. As survivors experience violence in addition to illness or other conditions, paid safe leave should be considered additive to family or medical leave and articulated within separate leave provisions. Furthermore, we ask the Committee to consult the experiences of survivors of violence and the advocates that serve them in crafting future legislation.

Upon consideration of legislation or hearings advancing paid safe leave, the signed organizations offer detailed recommendations and model legislative text.

Thank you for your continued commitment to highlighting the paid leave needs of American workers.

Best Regards,

A Better Balance

Alliance for Safety and Justice

Clayton Early Learning

Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice

Family Values @ Work

Futures Without Violence

Legal Aid at Work

Legal Momentum, The Women's Legal Defense and Education Fund

The National Domestic Violence Hotline

National Network to End Domestic Violence