

Proposal gives working families much needed benefit to care for sick family member or themselves without having to give up pay.

Madison, WI – State Senator **Janis Ringhand** (D – Evansville) and Representative **Sondy Pope** (D – Cross Plains) introduced the Family Medical Leave Insurance Act (FMLIA). The Act creates a Family Medical Leave Insurance program completely paid for by employees. Under the program a participating employee is eligible to receive a percentage of their pay during the time they take family or medical leave from work. The program would not cost employers any money. Employees pay for the benefit by contributing a certain percentage of their check into a trust fund. The percentage was to be determined by Department of Workforce Development in consultation with Office of the Commissioner of Insurance.



"I've had to take time off without pay to care for my son after he broke his femur bone. Luckily my husband had a good union job and our family still had a source of income. For far too many families living paycheck to paycheck it's not an option to give up one day's pay much less a longer period. Studies have shown that allowing people to earn a portion of their salary while off caring for a sick family member is a win for the employee and employer. It's time Wisconsin had such a program," **said Ringhand**.



In addition, the Act seeks to expand Wisconsin's current Family Medical Leave law by allowing employees to take family leave to care for anyone covered under the current law plus grandparents, grandchildren, siblings, and any eligible employee who has an eligible family member deployed overseas by the military.

"Our Family Medical Leave law needs updating to reflect the dynamics of modern families. Even

President Trump has indicated support for allowing people to take paid time off from work under certain instances," **said Representative Pope**.

The Act is modeled on already-existing programs in California, New Jersey, and Rhode Island that have created self-sustaining funds to ensure workers can earn a portion of their wages when ill or carrying for a sick relative.