

## **The Agenda for America's Entrepreneurs: Paid family and medical leave, retirement and other benefits**

The way Americans work and start a business is changing, which has been especially true during the COVID-19 pandemic. The health crisis has also underscored why today's entrepreneurs and small business employees need a modernized and robust benefits infrastructure that promotes wealth creation, financial security and quality jobs for those who do not work for large organizations. It must also be adaptable to events like COVID-19 so that no one's ability to access critical benefits and services depends solely on their employment status.

### **Top three priorities for Congress to support small business**

- Support federal and state efforts to establish publicly-administered retirement savings programs ("Secure Choice") programs to help more small businesses and their employees access retirement plans.
- Pass the FAMILY Act to establish a national program that would provide partial wage replacement for small business employees and the self-employed to access parental leave or to handle serious health conditions for themselves and family members.
- In the absence of a federal program, support continued legislative efforts in all states to establish paid family and medical leave insurance programs. Legislative proposals should include partial wage replacement for employees of all businesses with two or more employees, allow for participation from the self-employed and be fully administered by a state entity to avoid placing administrative burden on small businesses.

### **Additional policies to support our evolving entrepreneurial community while ensuring small businesses have access to skilled workers**

- Allow independent entrepreneurs to access Secure Choice programs, understanding many freelancers and self-employed individuals are unable to access traditional retirement benefits.
- Support similar retirement savings measures at the federal level. Moving forward, legislative proposals should ensure employee contributions are portable between jobs and make participation open to the self-employed.
- Promote government and other programs to educate small businesses about paid family and medical leave insurance programs available at the state level.
- Implement policies at the national and state level that would help more working parents afford child care, understanding this is essential to retaining a skilled workforce. This could include expanding and improving federal income tax credits for child care expenses that would allow for working parents to receive a percentage of child care expenses back as a tax refund.
- Encourage the U.S. Department of Labor to institute a Benefits Innovation Fund to stimulate more investment in portable benefits models.
- Adopt policies to make workers compensation and unemployment insurance available to non-traditional workers and reform requirements that penalize non-traditional work.