



April 8, 2026

Governor Abigail Spanberger  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Patrick Henry Building  
1111 East Broad Street  
General Assembly Building  
Richmond, VA 23219

*RE: Small Business Majority supports paid family and medical leave*

Dear Governor Spanberger:

As a representative of Virginia's small business community, Small Business Majority writes today to urge you to sign House Bill 1207 and Senate Bill 2 into law to establish a paid family and medical leave insurance program in Virginia.

A Commonwealth-run program would further modernize and create a robust benefits infrastructure that can benefit small business owners and their employees. These bills would establish a paid family and medical leave insurance program in the Commonwealth, ensuring eligible employees can take at least 12 weeks of paid time away from work when they need it to care for a new child, a family member's or their own serious health condition.

Implementing a paid family and medical leave program is a commonsense policy solution that small businesses can get behind. In fact, a Small Business Majority survey found that 66% of small business owners support establishing a publicly administered paid family and medical leave program.<sup>1</sup> Entrepreneurs like Richmond small business owner Sandra Leibowitz want to offer benefits like paid leave. As she stated in an op-ed, published recently in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*: "I know firsthand that employers want to be able to offer competitive benefits to our employees — not only because it's the right thing to do, but also so we can better attract and retain great workers. Yet, the cost of offering benefits like paid family and medical leave is often prohibitive to small-business employers like me...We need help allowing our employees the time they need."<sup>2</sup>

With access to robust and comprehensive benefits like paid family and medical leave at a reasonable cost, it would be easier for more small businesses to succeed. Meanwhile, small business employees and self-employed entrepreneurs would be able to take time away from work when it matters most without being concerned about missing paychecks. We urge you to sign House Bill 1207 and Senate Bill 2 into law to help Virginia's small business community thrive.

Sincerely,

Awesta Sarkash  
Vice President, State Policy & Advocacy, Small Business Majority

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<sup>1</sup> "Opinion Poll: Virginia small business owners say government doesn't understand their concerns, need help with healthcare costs and other challenges." Small Business Majority. August 14, 2019. <https://smallbusinessmajority.org/sites/default/files/research-reports/081419-VA-Small-Business-Policy-Solutions-Poll.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> "Paid family and medical leave would close the benefits gap for small businesses." Sandra Leibowitz. *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. February 19, 2026. [https://richmond.com/opinion/column/article\\_a9aa205f-77cc-4b7d-b89f-4f3c8fafbfd9.html](https://richmond.com/opinion/column/article_a9aa205f-77cc-4b7d-b89f-4f3c8fafbfd9.html)