

March 23, 2022

The Honorable Bill Werkheiser
Chairman, House Committee on Industry and
Labor
218-A State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334

The Honorable Tom Kirby
Vice Chairman, House Committee on Industry
and Labor
501-C Coverdell Legislative Office Bldg.
Atlanta, GA 30334

RE: The Georgia Family Insurance Act (HB 1517)

Dear Chairman Werkheiser, Vice Chairman Kirby and Members of the Committee:

As a representative of the 1.1 million small businesses in Georgia, Small Business Majority asks you to support the Georgia Family Insurance Act (HB 1517), which would establish a state-run insurance program that would guarantee all eligible workers 12 weeks of paid medical and family leave.

Small Business Majority empowers Georgia's diverse entrepreneurs to build a thriving and equitable economy. Along with our Georgia Small Business Council, we engage 3,300 small business owners across the state to advocate for public policy solutions and deliver resources to entrepreneurs that promote equitable small business growth. A key component of our work in Georgia involves outreach to small business owners on a range of small business issues, including access to capital, workforce issues, healthcare and more.

Small business owners often wish they could offer paid family or medical leave benefits to their employees, but they typically cannot afford to do so. Not only does this mean business owners cannot support their valued workers, but it also puts them at a disadvantage when trying to attract and retain top talent since larger firms often provide paid leave benefits. A state-run program would help small businesses facilitate access to a critical benefit while also supporting their bottom lines.

We also know from our research that small businesses are supportive of state-run paid family and medical leave programs. Our opinion polling found that a plurality of small businesses in Georgia support creating a state paid family and medical leave insurance program that is funded by a payroll tax paid for by employees and employers.

Creating a family medical leave program will help small businesses become more competitive by ensuring that all workers can receive paid family leave regardless of the size of the company at which they work. In this tight labor market, any step that can help small businesses compete is critical.

Small business owners understand how important it is for their employees to be able to balance their work and family responsibilities and want them to have reasonable options for doing so, but they want options that also make sense for their bottom lines. I strongly urge you to vote in support HB 1517 and support small business owners and employees across the state of Georgia.

Sincerely,

Rachel Shanklin
Georgia Outreach Manager