

October 10, 2019

Dear Chairman Inhofe, Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Reed, and Ranking Member Thornberry:

We, the undersigned organizations, request that you include the **bipartisan Federal Employee Paid Leave Act (FEPLA) provision of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2020**, contained in subtitle B of title XI of the House amendment, in the final conference report. We are joined by **over 100 additional organizations that have expressed their support** for this provision ([see attachment A](#)). This bipartisan provision has the support of the majority of Members of Congress in both chambers. FEPLA would provide 12 weeks of paid leave for the birth, adoption or foster placement of a new child; to care for a spouse, child or parent; for particular military caregiving and leave purposes; and for personal health reasons to federal workers who are eligible for job protected, unpaid leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act.

With more than 2 million employees, the federal government is the nation's largest employer, yet provides no paid family and medical leave. This leaves federal workers forced to choose between a paycheck and caring for a loved one, a newborn or themselves. FEPLA would support the health and well-being of federal employees, and would benefit the entire federal government by reducing turnover and helping the government attract and retain talented workers. It will also improve military readiness by maintaining a strong civilian workforce in the many agencies that support the military and supporting the federal employees who are part of military families, and will support the veterans who currently work as civilian federal employees.

We are encouraged that a bipartisan majority of both the House and Senate have indicated support of the FEPLA provision. We believe that this strong support indicates that it must remain part of the final NDAA conference agreement.

This provision gained a majority of support in the House of Representatives when it was passed as part of the manager's amendment to the Rules Committee print of the NDAA with 234 votes in favor. Two Republicans have separately written in support of the FEPLA provision ([see attachment B](#)), and one cosponsored the FEPLA amendment.

In the Senate, the Motion to Instruct the conferees to include the FEPLA provision gained the support of 47 Senators, including four Republicans. Four of the five Senators absent from the vote separately indicated their support for FEPLA by cosponsoring the Motion to Instruct ([see attachment C](#)). This means that 51 Senators, a majority of the Senate, wants FEPLA to be included in the final NDAA conference agreement.

We hope that you will take into consideration the strong, bipartisan support for FEPLA in both chambers of Congress as you finish final negotiations on the NDAA for Fiscal Year 2020. Thank you in advance for your work on this critical issue that will benefit the entire country.

Sincerely,

American Association of University Women
American Civil Liberties Union
American Federation of Government Employees
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees
Center for American Progress
Family Values @ Work
Labor Project for Working Families in partnership with Family Values @ Work
MomsRising
National Active and Retired Federal Employees
National Military Family Association
National Partnership for Women & Families
National Treasury Employees Union