

HENRY A. WAXMAN, CALIFORNIA,  
CHAIRMAN

TOM LANTOS, CALIFORNIA  
EDOLPHUS TOWNS, NEW YORK  
PAUL E. KANJORSKI, PENNSYLVANIA  
CAROLYN B. MALONEY, NEW YORK  
ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS, MARYLAND  
DENNIS J. KUCINICH, OHIO  
DANNY K. DAVIS, ILLINOIS  
JOHN F. TIERNEY, MASSACHUSETTS  
WM. LACY CLAY, MISSOURI  
DIANE E. WATSON, CALIFORNIA  
STEPHEN F. LYNCH, MASSACHUSETTS  
BRIAN HIGGINS, NEW YORK  
JOHN A. YARMUTH, KENTUCKY  
BRUCE L. BRALEY, IOWA  
ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON,  
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
BETTY McCOLLUM, MINNESOTA  
JIM COOPER, TENNESSEE  
CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, MARYLAND  
PAUL W. HODES, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
CHRISTOPHER S. MURPHY, CONNECTICUT  
JOHN P. SARBANES, MARYLAND  
PETER WELCH, VERMONT

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051  
FACSIMILE (202) 225-4784  
MINORITY (202) 225-5074

[www.oversight.house.gov](http://www.oversight.house.gov)

TOM DAVIS, VIRGINIA,  
RANKING MINORITY MEMBER

DAN BURTON, INDIANA  
CHRISTOPHER SHAYS, CONNECTICUT  
JOHN M. McHUGH, NEW YORK  
JOHN L. MICA, FLORIDA  
MARK E. SOUDER, INDIANA  
TODD RUSSELL PLATTS, PENNSYLVANIA  
CHRIS CANNON, UTAH  
JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR., TENNESSEE  
MICHAEL R. TURNER, OHIO  
DARRELL E. ISSA, CALIFORNIA  
KENNY MARCHANT, TEXAS  
LYNN A. WESTMORELAND, GEORGIA  
PATRICK T. McHENRY, NORTH CAROLINA  
VIRGINIA FOXX, NORTH CAROLINA  
BRIAN P. BILBRAY, CALIFORNIA  
BILL SALI, IDAHO  
JIM JORDAN, OHIO

### STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN DANNY K. DAVIS AT THE

### SUBCOMMITTEE ON FEDERAL WORKFORCE, POSTAL SERVICE, AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA HEARING ON

### “Investing In the Future of the Federal Workforce: Paid Parental Leave to Improve Recruitment and Retention”

Thursday, March 6, 2008

Members of the Subcommittee, members of the Joint Economic Committee, especially Vice-Chair Carolyn Maloney, and hearing witnesses, welcome to the Subcommittee’s joint hearing on paid parental leave for federal employees. Today’s hearing will examine the merits of H.R. 3799, “Federal Employees Paid Parental Leave Act of 2007” (the Act) introduced by Vice-Chair Carolyn Maloney. The Act provides that all federal employees receive eight weeks of full pay and benefits for leave taken for the birth or adoption of a child.

The issue of parental leave is an important one and I am pleased to be a cosponsor of this legislation. The United States is far behind the world in offering paid leave for parents: 168 countries offer guaranteed paid leave to women in connection with childbirth; 98 of these countries offer 14 or more weeks paid leave. The United States guarantees no paid leave for mothers in any segment of the work force.

The Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), enacted in 1993, added 12 weeks of job-protected leave for the birth or adoption of a child. While this unpaid leave has helped millions of families, many employees have been unable to take time off to care for a new child or a

seriously ill loved one because they cannot afford the lost pay. H.R. 3799 remedies this problem for federal employees and will bring the United States more in line with the rest of the world.

The United States is supposed to be a world leader and in this area we have been followers, it is time for us to catch up and provide paid family leave for federal employees. During the mark up of H.R. 3799, I will offer an amendment that directs the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to study the feasibility of providing a disability insurance benefit to federal employees. The disability insurance benefit, excluding paternal leave, would include paid time off for federal employees caring for a spouse, child, or parent that has a serious health condition and can not care for themselves and/or a federal employee that has a serious health condition that renders him or her unable to perform their job functions. GAO would also analyze disability insurance benefits that are currently being offered by states, local governments and the private sector.

Today, I will introduce legislation that will extend the maximum age to qualify for coverage for dependents under the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) from age 22 to age 25. Young adults are the fastest-growing age group among the uninsured. While the current law provides health insurance until age 22, studies such as the one done by the Commonwealth Fund (which is an organization that aims to promote a high performing health care system in the United States), found that, college-educated or not, 22 year olds face waiting periods, temporary positions, and lower wage jobs as they enter the job market. Health care is not available to them at a price they can afford. Several states have enacted new legislation to avert this health crisis.

Providing federal employees with paid parental leave and raising the maximum age to qualify for FEHBP from 22 to 25, will increase worker morale and improve productivity by creating a more family-friendly environment for federal employees.

Thank you all for being here today and I look forward to the witness testimonies.