

Minnesota Chapter

INCORPORATED IN MINNESOTA

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



Minnesota Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

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February 2, 2023

Children and Families Finance and Policy Committee
State Office Building
100 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St Paul, MN 55155

Members of the Children and Families Finance and Policy Committee,

On behalf of the nearly 1,000 members of the Minnesota Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MNAAP), I am writing in strong support of HF2.

This legislation offers children, families, and caregivers with comprehensive support, security, and needed stability through a comprehensive paid family and medical leave (PFML) program.

Pediatricians have long understood the numerous health benefits of PFML for our youngest Minnesotans and their families. As many of you know, a child's brain grows more quickly in the first 1,000 days than at any other time in their life. Studies have shown that children who receive consistent and responsive care from their parents in the first 6-12 weeks of life are far more likely to have positive physical health outcomes, improved cognitive development, and are set on an upward trajectory for healthy life. PFML also increases the chances of parents detecting any developmental or other medical conditions in their child. When these conditions can be discovered early, medical professionals have a higher chance of successful intervention, preventing long-term and serious health problems.

The current lack of PFML in Minnesota has a disproportionate impact on children and families from marginalized communities who are less likely to otherwise have access to it. 93% of low wage and 94% of part-time workers have no access to paid leave. Additionally, more than 65% of Black and 75% of Latinx parents are ineligible or unable to afford unpaid leave, worsening already existing health disparities.

In hospitals, clinics, and our daily lives, we hear stories about families who are forced to choose between earning a paycheck and providing care for their child – a decision no parent should be forced to make.

MNAAP asks for your support of HF2.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eileen Crespo". The signature is written in a cursive style and is set against a light green rectangular background.

Eileen Crespo, MD, FAAP

President, Minnesota Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics