



Improving Health and Productivity: Family Care Act

Sponsored by Rep. Katie Dempsey (R-Rome), this bill will allow employees to use their own sick days for care of immediate family members. The bill has bipartisan support and was passed by the GA House Industrial Relations Committee in March 2012.

Employers, classrooms and workplaces all benefit when working family members are able to keep sick children at home and ensure that ill family members get the care they need.

The Need

Today, women make up more than 50% of our workforce. Over 65% of mothers work outside the home. Where both parents work and in single parent households, a sick child creates a crisis. No one can 'plan' for a child's illness. Without flexible use of sick days, parents resort to sending sick children to school, spreading germs to other students and teachers.

A Realistic, Cost-Effective Policy

Allow use of existing employer-provided sick days for illness of an employee's child, spouse or parent. Eight states currently have laws providing access to sick days for ill family members.

Proposed legislation would require **no expansion of the benefits provided under the employer's sick leave policy.** It would simply allow employees added flexibility by using sick days that they have already earned, through existing company policies, in cases where the illness of a family member requires them to remain with a child, parent or spouse.

The Family Care Act will Benefit Employers *and* Families

▶ A study conducted by Wake Forest University shows that **increased work flexibility reduces absences for illness and improves job commitment.** Workers also were less likely to indicate that health issues affected their job performance. (Grzywacz & Casey, 2008).

How can workplace flexibility promote the health of your organization?

- ▶ Reduce health care costs
- ▶ Increase commitment and loyalty
- ▶ Lower absenteeism
- ▶ Improve job performance
- ▶ Reduce hiring and re-training costs
- ▶ Decrease employee turnover

Source: Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, Effective Workplace Series

We commend local employers who are good citizens and provide family care days for their employees, including Delta Airlines, the State of Georgia, Federal Home Loan Bank and SunTrust Bank.

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