



RE: Testimony in Favor of LD 1964, An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Commission to Develop a Paid Family and Medical Leave Benefits Program

Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and Members of the Committee on Labor and Housing,

My name is Dr. Connie Adler. I provided primary care and obstetrical care for women in Farmington for 30 years until my recent retirement. This issue of lack of family and medical leave came up constantly for my patients over those years.

It came up for R, a woman who cried as she told me she had to leave her baby and go back to work two weeks after delivery. Without that paycheck, she could not pay the rent, and her whole family would be homeless. She had wanted to breastfeed, but it became impossible due to her hours at work. And the majority of women I saw went back to work at six weeks postpartum because they could not afford to stay out. They and their babies suffered as a consequence.

And I remember B: She had to take vacation days to take her mother to her chemo and radiation because her mother had breast cancer and got too sick after either one to drive herself. It meant that B. had no vacation days left and did not get paid for those days when she could not work. She could not stay home with her own kids when they were on school vacation.

There were also multiple times when women were trying to escape violent partners when they had to quit their jobs because they could not take a leave while they got protection orders and it was just too dangerous to go to work where they might be found.

Really, the list goes on and on. There are just periods in the lives of working people when they briefly need to be out of work without risking their rent or their ability to feed their families.

Massachusetts has a Paid Family Leave and it has not crashed their economy. It would not crash ours. What it WOULD do is show our citizens that they have earned respect for their work and that we will not abandon them in rough times. It would also mean that we think our children are important and that we support them in the crucial first days of their lives with their parents.

There are many ways that I, as a physician, can care for my patients. I can give them attention, advice, and medicine if needed. But I cannot give them time. Only you can do that. And you should.

Connie Adler, MD  
Grandmothers for Reproductive Rights  
Chesterville, ME

Kelli McCannell  
Grandmothers for Reproductive Rights  
LD 1964

This testimony is written by Dr. Connie Adler and will be read by Kelli McCannell  
via zoom testimony.