

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 296

Designating October 2009 as “National Work and Family Month”.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 30, 2009

Mrs. LINCOLN (for herself, Mr. CRAPO, and Mr. KOHL) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

RESOLUTION

Designating October 2009 as “National Work and Family Month”.

Whereas, according to a report by WorldatWork, a nonprofit professional association with expertise in attracting, motivating, and retaining employees, the quality of workers’ jobs and the supportiveness of their workplaces are key predictors of workers’ job productivity, job satisfaction, and commitment to employers and of employers’ ability to retain workers;

Whereas, according to the 2008 National Study of Employers by the Families and Work Institute, employees in more flexible and supportive workplaces are more effective employees, are more highly engaged and less likely to look for a new job in the next year, and enjoy better overall health, better mental health, and lower levels of stress

than employees in workplaces that provide less flexibility and support;

Whereas, according to a 2004 report of the Families and Work Institute entitled “Overwork in America”, employees who are able to effectively balance family and work responsibilities are less likely to report making mistakes or feel resentment toward employers and coworkers;

Whereas, according to the “Best Places to Work in the Federal Government” rankings released by the Partnership for Public Service and American University’s Institute for the Study of Public Policy Implementation, work-life balance and a family-friendly culture are among the key drivers of engagement and satisfaction for employees in the Federal workforce;

Whereas, according to a 2009 survey of college students by the Partnership for Public Service and Universum USA entitled “Great Expectations! What Students Want in an Employer and How Federal Agencies Can Deliver It”, attaining a healthy work-life balance was an important career goal of 66 percent of the students surveyed;

Whereas a 2008 study by the Partnership for Public Service entitled “A Golden Opportunity: Recruiting Baby Boomers into Government” revealed that workers between the ages of 50 and 65 are a strong source of experienced talent for the Federal workforce and that nearly 50 percent of workers in that age group find flexible work schedules “extremely appealing”;

Whereas finding a good work-life balance is important to workers in multiple generations;

Whereas employees who are able to effectively balance family and work responsibilities tend to feel healthier and more

successful in their relationships with their spouses, children, and friends;

Whereas 85 percent of wage and salaried workers in the United States have immediate, day-to-day family responsibilities outside of their jobs;

Whereas, in 2000, research by the Radcliffe Public Policy Center revealed that men in their 20s and 30s and women in their 20s, 30s, and 40s identified a work schedule that allows them to spend time with their families as the most important job characteristic for them;

Whereas, according to the 2006 American Community Survey by the United States Census Bureau, 47 percent of wage and salaried workers in the United States are parents with children under the age of 18 who live with them at least half-time;

Whereas job flexibility often allows parents to be more involved in their children's lives and research demonstrates that parental involvement is associated with children's higher achievement in language and mathematics, improved behavior, greater academic persistence, and lower dropout rates;

Whereas the 2000 Urban Working Families study demonstrated that a lack of job flexibility for working parents negatively affects children's health in ways that range from children being unable to make needed doctors' appointments to children receiving inadequate early care, leading to more severe and prolonged illness;

Whereas, from 2001 to the beginning of 2008, 1,700,000 active duty troops served in Iraq and 600,000 members of the National Guard and Reserve (133,000 on more than one tour) were called up to serve in Iraq;

Whereas, because so many of those troops and National Guard and Reserve members have families, there needs to be a focus on policies and programs that can help military families adjust to the realities that come with having a family member in the military;

Whereas research by the Sloan Center for Aging and Work reveals that the majority of workers aged 53 and older attribute their success as an employee by a great or moderate extent to having access to flexibility in their jobs and that the majority of those workers also report that, to a great extent, flexibility options contribute to an overall higher quality of life;

Whereas studies show that $\frac{1}{3}$ of children and adolescents in the United States are obese or overweight, and healthy lifestyle habits, including healthy eating and physical activity, can lower the risk of becoming obese and developing related diseases;

Whereas studies report that family rituals, such as sitting down to dinner together and sharing activities on weekends and holidays, positively influence children's health and development and that children who eat dinner with their families every day consume nearly a full serving more of fruits and vegetables per day than those who never eat dinner with their families or do so only occasionally;

Whereas unpaid family caregivers will likely continue to be the largest source of long-term care services in the United States for the elderly;

Whereas the Department of Health and Human Services anticipates that by 2050 the number of such caregivers will reach 37,000,000, an increase of 85 percent from 2000,

as baby boomers reach retirement age in record numbers;
and

Whereas the month of October is an appropriate month to
designate as “National Work and Family Month”: Now,
therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) designates October 2009 as “National Work
3 and Family Month”;

4 (2) recognizes the importance of work schedules
5 that allow employees to spend time with their fami-
6 lies to job productivity and to healthy families;

7 (3) urges public officials, employers, employees,
8 and the general public to work together to achieve
9 more balance between work and family; and

10 (4) calls upon the people of the United States
11 to observe National Work and Family Month with
12 appropriate ceremonies and activities.

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