



# Metropolitan Washington Council, AFL-CIO

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## Metro Washington Council AFL-CIO Strongly Supports Universal Paid Leave Amendment Act of 2016

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**Washington, D.C.** – The Metropolitan Washington Council, AFL-CIO today reiterated its strong support for the “Universal Paid Leave Amendment Act of 2016.” The Metro Council is the region’s largest labor federation comprised of over 175 affiliated unions across the Metropolitan Washington region.

“We urge D.C. residents and working people, as well as our affiliated locals, to join us in pushing for passage of this critical law,” said Jackie Jeter, President of the Metropolitan Washington Council, ahead of Bill 21-415’s first reading on December 6<sup>th</sup>. “Most D.C. families currently can’t afford to take unpaid leave,” said Jeter. “That means that when tragedy strikes, they’re often faced with a terrible choice between their jobs or their loved ones.”

The proposed legislation calls for 11 weeks of gender equal parental leave, eight weeks of paid family caregiving leave and up to 90% pay replacement for low-income workers on leave. It also includes parental leave for new parents after the birth, adoption or fostering of a child, as well as caregiving leave to care for a sick, injured or dying loved one.

The legislation has undergone significant changes since initially being introduced. Earlier this week the DC Paid Family Leave coalition [released a statement](#) that called for the inclusion of medical leave coverage. “While we believe that medical leave coverage needs to be included, and will work to lift up the issue in the coming weeks, D.C. can’t afford to wait or delay any longer,” added Carlos Jimenez, Executive Director for the Metro Council. “We are gearing up now to run an aggressive mobilization campaign that educates and activates our membership to support passage of the Universal Paid Leave bill.”

“We will not back down from the fight for DC’s working families,” said Jeter. “We know that there are many large business interests that will oppose this bill, suggesting that paid leave is ‘too much, too soon’. But DC’s working families are tired of being told to wait.” Jimenez added that the Metro Council is “extremely concerned that there has been a reference to a moratorium on future economic legislation that would benefit working families, including discussions on safe staffing ratios and fair scheduling practices.” However, “today we’re focused on winning passage of paid leave. Skyrocketing inequality and new threats from the incoming administration mean our elected officials must do even more for working people, not less. Paid Family Leave is a huge step forward, but the Council’s work does not end there.”

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