



new hampshire
WOMEN'S FOUNDATION

April 5, 2018

Senator Gary Daniels, Chairman
Senate Finance Committee
New Hampshire Senate
107 North Main Street
Concord, NH 03301

Via Hand Delivery

RE: Testimony in Support of HB 628

Dear Chairman Daniels and Honorable Members of the Committee:

The New Hampshire Women's Foundation submits this written testimony in support of HB 628, and requests that you recommend the bill as Ought to Pass. The New Hampshire Women's Foundation invests in equality and opportunity for women and girls through research, education, advocacy, and philanthropy.

HB 628 will help New Hampshire attract and retain a diverse and vibrant workforce by establishing a paid family and medical leave insurance program for New Hampshire workers. Paid family and medical leave ensures that workers can manage the challenges we all face when we must care for ourselves or our family members. Establishment of a New Hampshire paid family and medical leave program is a top priority for the New Hampshire Women's Foundation.

Nearly every working person will at some point need time away from work to recover from illness or addiction, to welcome a new baby, to assist an aging parent, or to care for an injured spouse. The question is not whether workers will need time away from work; the question is whether they will be forced to choose between taking the time they need and making ends meet for their families. Under HB 628, New Hampshire has the opportunity to build a strong, sustainable paid family and medical leave program that will help hardworking Granite Staters bridge the financial gap when they need time away from work. HB 628 includes opt-out provisions for both employers and employees. It offers a modest, six-week benefit (partially replacing the worker's wages) funded exclusively through voluntary worker contributions. The program would be managed by New Hampshire Employment Security, the state agency that administers New Hampshire's unemployment insurance program and very capably shepherded that program through periods of high unemployment during the Great Recession.

The New Hampshire Women's Foundation appreciates the strong bipartisan support for this bill and will be pleased to work with the Committee as you consider it. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,

Sarah Mattson Dustin
Director of Policy