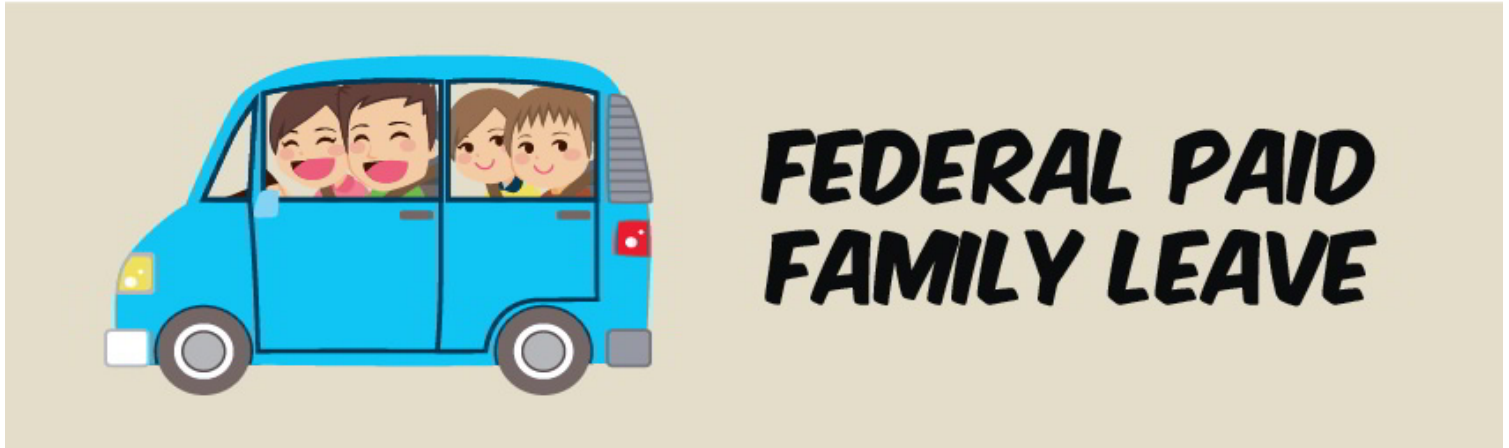


# Federal paid family leave gains momentum



As the Trump administration marks 18 months in power and gears up for a challenging mid-term election season, there has been renewed interest in enacting some form of federal paid leave legislation.

Ivanka Trump, the president's daughter and a White House special adviser, has long expressed interest in making paid family or parental leave a reality. Now those efforts appear to be ramping up. Here's what we know so far.

The First Daughter wrote an opinion piece for Fox News in which she said that there was now a growing consensus among congressional Republicans that they could get behind the idea of a national program of paid parental leave.

Trump wrote, "If executed responsibly, paid family leave is targeted government action with the right incentives designed to increase the independence, health and dignity of our citizens."

In mid-July, a subcommittee of the Senate Finance Committee held hearings on paid parental leave proposals.

Democrats pushed the Family Act, which would fund paid leave covering time off for new parents, seriously ill workers and those caring for sick relatives. Leave would be funded by a small payroll tax.

Republicans—led by Sens. Joni Ernst (Iowa), Mike Lee (Utah) and Marco Rubio (Florida)—voiced support for another approach: Using Social Security entitlements to fund time off for new parents. Time off taken for parental leave would be debited against future benefits. For example, if new parents took 12 weeks of paid family leave, they would have to wait an extra 12 weeks to begin collecting Social Security when they retired. Formal legislation advancing that proposal has not been introduced.

**Final note:** Although there may not yet be consensus in Congress on what a final paid leave bill will look like, some states are moving ahead with their own proposals. Six states and the District of Columbia now have paid parental leave laws. California, New Jersey, New York and Rhode Island have programs up and running. Massachusetts, D.C. and Washington state are working toward implementation of new laws.