

Capitol Office
State Capitol, Room 5108
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 651-4023
(916) 324-4823 fax

www.sen.ca.gov/kuehl

Office of Senator Sheila Kuehl

Press Advisory



District Offices
10951 W. Pico Blvd., #202
Los Angeles, CA 90064
(310) 441-9084
(310) 441-0724 fax

300 W. Third Street
Oxnard, CA 93030
(805) 486-3776
(805) 486-6865 fax

Report on Who is Using Paid Family Leave Program Released

Kuehl Introduces Legislation to Expand Program to More Families

For Immediate Release: February 26, 2007
Contact: Jennifer Richard (916) 651-4023

(Sacramento) Today the Senate Office of Research released a report on use of California's ground-breaking Paid Family Leave program. The report was requested by Senator Sheila Kuehl (D-Santa Monica) who is the author of the first law in the nation to create a Paid Family Leave program. Under that law, workers can receive about 55% of their wages for up to six weeks while caring for a seriously ill parent, child, spouse or domestic partner or while bonding with a new child. Since July 1, 2004 when the program became fully operational, over 400,000 Californians have benefited from the program.

The Senate Office of Research report, *Balancing Work and Family*, examines who is using the new benefit program and for what purposes. Key findings include:

- Workers at all earning levels (except those part-time and intermittent workers earning less than \$12,000 per year) received benefits in proportion to their representation in the workforce.
- 80 percent of claims were filed by women
- Women had twice as many care claims and five times as many bonding claims as men
- Almost one-third of care claims were for surgical procedures, around 18 percent were for cancer, and about 10 percent were for circulatory-related diseases
- Siblings, grandparents and in-laws --who are not covered under the paid leave program-- accounted for the largest number of claims denied because of relationship issues

In response to the report Senator Kuehl said, "I am glad to see that so many families have been able to take advantage of this important benefit in times of need and I would like to see more families be able to do so in the future." On Friday, February 23, Kuehl introduced Senate Bill 727 which would expand the list of eligible family members a worker can care for under the program to include grandparents, grandchildren, parents-in-law, and siblings. "So many people provide care and support for extended family members," said Senator Kuehl. "SB 727 will ensure that the Paid Family Leave Program meets the needs of today's families."