



## IWV Supports the Workplace Flexibility in the 21st Century Act

November 7, 2017

Dear Members of Congress,

On behalf of Independent Women's Voice, a 501(c)(4) organization for women, men and families, I urge you to support of the Workplace Flexibility in the 21st Century Act (H.R. 4219), introduced by Representative Mimi Walters (R-CA). This important legislation will do much to modernize workplace policies to meet the needs of both employers and employees in the 21st century. Consequently, the bill will give workers more flexibility to balance work and personal responsibilities.

The Workplace Flexibility in the 21st Century Act amends the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) by adding a "Qualified Flexible Work Arrangement Plan" (QFWA) to the definition of an ERISA plan. Importantly, the bill encourages employers to adopt QFWA plans voluntarily rather than requiring them to, and offers employers relief from today's hodgepodge of state and local laws governing paid leave and workplace flexibility requirements.

This will allow employers to accommodate varying work environments, employees, and other factors rather than being forced to adopt a one-size-fits-all government mandate. To qualify as a ERISA plan, an employer would need to offer his or her workers with two benefits: Flexible work arrangements and paid leave.

According to the [National Study of the Changing Workforce](#) (NSCW), 85% of employees say that flexible work arrangements (e.g., telework, predictable scheduling) are "extremely" or "very" important to them when considering a new job. In fact, Millennials, our nation's future leaders, value workplace flexibility more than any other age group, with 93% in the same survey reporting that flexibility would be very important when looking for a new job.

Access to paid leave is also important to many workers. Workers often need to take time off, whether it's to care for a loved one requiring long-term medical care or to welcome a new baby into the world. This is exactly why policymakers should pursue policies that make it easier for employers to provide employees with maximum flexibility and greater opportunities so workers can make choices in accordance with what works best for them and their families.

Independent Women's Voice applauds Representative Mimi Walters for her leadership on this important issue and strongly urges other Members of Congress to support The Workplace Flexibility in the 21st Century Act.

Respectfully,

**Hadley Heath Manning**

*Director of Policy, Independent Women's Voice*