



Testimony in Support

An Act Relating To Labor And Labor Relations -- Temporary Disability Insurance -- General Provisions

April 9th, 2025

The Latino Policy Institute (LPI) strongly supports House Bill 6066, which would expand Rhode Island's Temporary Caregiver Insurance (TCI) program to ensure that all workers—especially those earning low wages—can afford to take time off to care for loved ones. At LPI, we are committed to advancing policies that promote economic equity and support the well-being of Latino communities across our state. H6066 reflects those priorities.

Many Rhode Islanders cannot access the benefits of paid family leave because they cannot afford the 40% wage cut required under the current structure. This burden falls hardest on low-wage workers, who are disproportionately Latino, Black, and immigrant. By increasing the wage replacement rate from 60% to 85%, H6066 addresses this core equity issue—ensuring that all workers, regardless of income, can take time to care for a newborn, a parent, a grandparent, or a seriously ill family member without risking their financial stability.

We also commend the bill's expanded definition of family, allowing individuals to take leave to care for siblings, grandchildren, and care recipients. This change is essential for communities where caregiving networks extend beyond the traditional nuclear family. It also supports LGBTQ individuals, former foster youth, and those aging without close kin. Expanding eligibility makes TCI more inclusive and reflective of Rhode Islanders' lived realities.

We also recognize and support Senate Leader Lawson's forthcoming bill, which offers a more incremental path to wage equity within TCI. While we recommend aligning the two chambers, we proudly support H6066 as a bold, equity-driven proposal that moves Rhode Island closer to a fair and inclusive paid leave system.

Paid family leave is not a luxury; it is a necessity for working families. HB-6066 strengthens our state's caregiving infrastructure, promotes healthier families and communities, and affirms that no one should choose between caring for a loved one and earning a paycheck. We urge you to pass this legislation and continue building a Rhode Island where everyone has the freedom to care.

Thank you for your time and your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Marcela Betancur
Executive Director
Latino Policy Institute