



## Michigan National Organization for Women

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May 25, 2010

Honorable Members of the House Committee on Families and Children's Services  
House Office Building  
Lansing, Michigan

Subject: H.B. 4312, Paid Adoption Leave

Dear Representatives,

Michigan NOW, the largest multi-issue women's rights organization in Michigan, urges your referral of House Bill 4312.

This bill merely includes adoption, along with natural childbirth, as eligible for paid leave when an employer already provides paid childbirth leave of absence.

One of the deficits in Michigan law is the failure to have a law assuring new parents of time off – paid or unpaid -- for the mother to heal from childbirth and for both parents to bond with a new child, be it from natural child birth or adoption. The federal Family and Medical Leave Act only merely covers large employers of 50 or more. Many women of child bearing age work for small employers that FMLA doesn't reach.

Research is now indicating how important these early months are to brain development for the newborn and their future as productive citizens. The early months in an adoption are also crucial to the bonding process. We wish the bill went further to require all Michigan employers, of whatever size, to provide paid family leave for the birth or adoption of a child. We urge you to consider such a measure in the future.

We can hardly say we are a pro-family state when we don't require all Michigan employers to provide family leave of absence. This bill is a first step and shouldn't be the last effort to move toward that goal.

Sincerely,

Mary Pollock  
Legislative Vice President

*NOW's purpose is to take action to bring women into full participation in the mainstream of American society now, exercising all privileges and responsibilities thereof in truly equal partnership with men.*