Statement on the Family Medical Leave Modernization Act
Submitted as testimony to the House Education and Labor Committee’s
Subcommittee on Workforce Protections Hearing on “Balancing Work, Health, and Family: The
Case for Expanding the Family and Medical Leave Act.”
February 11, 2020

The undersigned members of the Developmental Disabilities, Autism and Family Support Task
Force of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) express our strong support for the
Family Medical Leave Modernization Act (H.R. 5456). CCD is the largest coalition of national
organizations working together to advocate for federal public policy that ensures the self-
determination, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion of children and adults
with disabilities in all aspects of society.

Our organizations serve and advocate on behalf of persons with a range of intellectual and
developmental disabilities (I/DD), such as autism, Down syndrome, and cerebral palsy. The
vast majority of our constituents live in the family home and families are overwhelmingly
their primary source of support. Unfortunately, the significant and growing reliance on
families is not being met with policies that help families to balance their work and family
responsibilities.

The Family and Medical Leave Act currently only includes family leave to care for a spouse,
son, daughter, or parent. H.R. 5456 acknowledges the broader nature of family caregiving
relationships, and expands the law to cover siblings, domestic partners, adult children, and
others. This expansion is needed to address significant changes in the American workforce and
the conception of family since the Family and Medical Leave Act was first enacted. More
women have entered the workforce and some state laws now confer family rights to persons
not related by blood or marriage, such as domestic partners.

The Family Medical Leave Modernization Act would help to take pressure off millions of
working Americans, including those who have a family member with a disability. This
legislation is especially important for siblings of persons with I/DD when their parents grow
older and can no longer fulfill their caregiving responsibilities.

We are also particularly appreciative that the bill expands covered leave to include parental
involvement and family wellness leave to attend school functions and other family care
needs. This will ensure that no parent of child with disabilities will have to risk job security
for attending his/her child’s individualized education plan (IEP) or other disability-related
service meetings.
Allies for Independence
American Network of Community Options & Resources
Autism Society of America
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Center for Public Representation
CommunicationFIRST
Easterseals
Family Voices
National Alliance for Caregiving
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Center for Parent Leadership, Advocacy, and Community Empowerment
National Disability Rights Network
National Down Syndrome Congress
National Respite Coalition
Special Needs Alliance
TASH
The Arc of the United States