



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

Statement by Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. on Adoption of Paid Family Leave Policy

JOSEPH P. ADDABBO JR. April 1, 2016

“Eight years ago, when I was still a member of the New York City Council, I stood with Assemblywoman Cathy Nolan calling for the enactment of a paid family leave program in New York. Then and now, I believed we needed a policy to allow parents to bond with their new babies and enable New York families to care for seriously ill loved ones without bankrupting themselves. We needed to help New York residents balance their equally important responsibilities at home and at work.

“Since joining the Senate, my beliefs have remained the same. I have supported paid family leave legislation in this Chamber since day one. I have been the prime Senate sponsor of the comprehensive proposal repeatedly approved by the Assembly for four years, and a co-sponsor before that.

“I am delighted we are now enacting a paid family leave program as part of this State Budget. While it doesn’t go as far as I would like in some ways, and I think it is being implemented much too slowly, I see it as a step in the right direction. Let me be clear, I have repeatedly said that it has never been a question of IF a family leave policy would be adopted in New York State. I have said it was only a question of WHEN. But just for the record, delaying benefits for years after the legislative adoption of a paid family leave program

was NOT the "when" I meant.

“Under the circumstances, we are making history in New York State today. Families with new babies and with seriously ill relatives, as well as military families facing active duty deployment challenges, will have the opportunity to eventually take off 12 weeks from work to address their very important issues on the home front. They will receive two-thirds of their wages. Their jobs will be protected. In addition, our businesses will benefit from increased loyalty and productivity from their employees. They will not bear the cost of paid family leave; workers will pay for it themselves through small payroll deductions.

"The joy of welcoming new babies into our homes crosses all political, social, ethnic, geographic and economic boundaries. So does the heartbreak of needing to care for chronically ill loved ones. It could happen to any one of us at any time.

“With this long overdue adoption of a paid family leave program, families in New York will be able to take time off from work to address these joys and hardships without going under financially or losing their jobs. In the end, when it is fully implemented, paid family leave will be doing the right thing for our workers and businesses in New York, who would experience similar paid family leave benefits that states like California, New Jersey and Rhode Island have been experiencing for years."