



## Washington Voters Support Family and Medical Leave Insurance

A poll of Washington state voters found 73% support the family and medical leave insurance proposal now moving through the state legislature. Only 23% opposed. The poll was conducted February 12-14, 2007 of 600 voters in Washington state by Lake Research Partners. Responses were to the question:

There is a proposal in the Washington State Legislature for a family leave insurance program that would entitle workers to up to 5 weeks of paid leave if needed to care for a new child or a seriously ill family member, or to recover from their own serious medical condition, with wage replacement at up to \$250 per week for a full-time worker. The 5 weeks of paid leave would cover all workers including part-timers and those who work for companies with less than 50 employees. The cost of the insurance would be covered by asking workers to pay premiums in the form of a payroll tax of 3 cents per hour, or about a quarter per day. That is about \$60 per year for a full time worker. Based on this description, would you support or oppose this proposal to provide Family Leave Insurance?<sup>1</sup>

Of employed voters, 62% said they or their spouse had needed to take family or medical leave in the previous 5 years, and 70% thought there was at least a 50/50 chance that they or their spouse would need family or medical leave in the next 5 years.

Strong majorities across demographic groups and regions of the state supported the proposal.

**Percent Supporting Family and Medical Leave Insurance**

	<b>Percent Support</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>
Total	73%	600
Women	79%	312
Men	65%	288
Children 18 or younger at home	70%	165
No Children under 18 at home	74%	429
Employed	72%	324
Retired/not employed	73%	268
Under 40	73%	109
40-49	66%	112
50-64	73%	198
65+	76%	172
Democrats	86%	247
Independents	67%	116
Republicans	60%	196
King County	70%	181
Pierce/Kitsap Counties	70%	91
Northwest <sup>2</sup>	80%	105
Southwest <sup>3</sup>	61%	107
Southeast <sup>4</sup>	80%	53
Northeast <sup>5</sup>	84%	63

<sup>1</sup> The bills in the legislature, HB 1658 and SB 5659, propose a 2 cent per hour payroll tax.

<sup>2</sup> Island, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom Counties

<sup>3</sup> Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Klickitat, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, Skamania, Thurston and Wahkiakum Counties

<sup>4</sup> Adams, Asotin, Benton, Columbia, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Kittitas, Walla Walla, Whitman and Yakima Counties

<sup>5</sup> Chelan, Douglas, Ferry, Lincoln, Okanagan, Pend Oreille, Spokane, and Stevens Counties