

S 497

Healthy Families Act

Congress: 114 (2015–2017, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Labor and Employment

Introduced: Feb 12, 2015

Current Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Latest Action: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. (Feb 12, 2015)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/497>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Murray, Patty [D-WA]

Party: Democratic • **State:** WA • **Chamber:** Senate

Cosponsors (34 total)

| Cosponsor | Party / State | Role | Date Joined |
|------------------------------------|---------------|------|--------------|
| Sen. Baldwin, Tammy [D-WI] | D · WI | | Feb 12, 2015 |
| Sen. Blumenthal, Richard [D-CT] | D · CT | | Feb 12, 2015 |
| Sen. Booker, Cory A. [D-NJ] | D · NJ | | Feb 12, 2015 |
| Sen. Brown, Sherrod [D-OH] | D · OH | | Feb 12, 2015 |
| Sen. Casey, Robert P., Jr. [D-PA] | D · PA | | Feb 12, 2015 |
| Sen. Coons, Christopher A. [D-DE] | D · DE | | Feb 12, 2015 |
| Sen. Durbin, Richard J. [D-IL] | D · IL | | Feb 12, 2015 |
| Sen. Franken, Al [D-MN] | D · MN | | Feb 12, 2015 |
| Sen. Gillibrand, Kirsten E. [D-NY] | D · NY | | Feb 12, 2015 |
| Sen. Heinrich, Martin [D-NM] | D · NM | | Feb 12, 2015 |
| Sen. Hirono, Mazie K. [D-HI] | D · HI | | Feb 12, 2015 |
| Sen. Leahy, Patrick J. [D-VT] | D · VT | | Feb 12, 2015 |
| Sen. Markey, Edward J. [D-MA] | D · MA | | Feb 12, 2015 |
| Sen. Merkley, Jeff [D-OR] | D · OR | | Feb 12, 2015 |
| Sen. Mikulski, Barbara A. [D-MD] | D · MD | | Feb 12, 2015 |
| Sen. Murphy, Christopher [D-CT] | D · CT | | Feb 12, 2015 |
| Sen. Peters, Gary C. [D-MI] | D · MI | | Feb 12, 2015 |
| Sen. Sanders, Bernard [I-VT] | I · VT | | Feb 12, 2015 |
| Sen. Warren, Elizabeth [D-MA] | D · MA | | Feb 12, 2015 |
| Sen. Whitehouse, Sheldon [D-RI] | D · RI | | Feb 12, 2015 |
| Sen. Schumer, Charles E. [D-NY] | D · NY | | Feb 23, 2015 |
| Sen. Klobuchar, Amy [D-MN] | D · MN | | Mar 26, 2015 |
| Sen. Stabenow, Debbie [D-MI] | D · MI | | Apr 28, 2015 |
| Sen. Kaine, Tim [D-VA] | D · VA | | May 5, 2015 |
| Sen. Bennet, Michael F. [D-CO] | D · CO | | May 11, 2015 |
| Sen. Boxer, Barbara [D-CA] | D · CA | | May 19, 2015 |
| Sen. Udall, Tom [D-NM] | D · NM | | Jun 22, 2015 |
| Sen. Cantwell, Maria [D-WA] | D · WA | | Jul 7, 2015 |
| Sen. Wyden, Ron [D-OR] | D · OR | | Jul 30, 2015 |
| Sen. Reed, Jack [D-RI] | D · RI | | Aug 5, 2015 |
| Sen. Reid, Harry [D-NV] | D · NV | | Feb 11, 2016 |
| Sen. King, Angus S., Jr. [I-ME] | I · ME | | Mar 1, 2016 |
| Sen. Menendez, Robert [D-NJ] | D · NJ | | Jul 13, 2016 |
| Sen. Cardin, Benjamin L. [D-MD] | D · MD | | Dec 1, 2016 |

Committee Activity

| Committee | Chamber | Activity | Date |
|--|---------|-------------|--------------|
| Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee | Senate | Referred To | Feb 12, 2015 |

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Labor and Employment

Related Bills

| Bill | Relationship | Last Action |
|------------|----------------|---|
| 114 HR 932 | Identical bill | Apr 29, 2015: Referred to the Subcommittee on Health, Employment, Labor, and Pensions. |

Summary (as of Feb 12, 2015)

Healthy Families Act

Requires certain employers, who employ 15 or more employees for each working day during 20 or more workweeks a year, to permit each employee to earn at least 1 hour of paid sick time for every 30 hours worked.

Authorizes small employers with fewer than 15 employees to provide the same paid sick time, but allows them to opt out. Requires any small employer that opts out to provide at least 56 hours of unpaid sick time to each employee per calendar year.

Declares that an employer shall not be required to permit an employee to earn more than 56 hours of paid sick time in a calendar year, unless the employer chooses to set a higher limit.

Allows employees to use such time to: (1) meet their own medical needs; (2) care for the medical needs of certain family members (including a domestic partner or the domestic partner's parent or child); or (3) seek medical attention, assist a related person, take legal action, or engage in other specified activities relating to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Prohibits an employer from interfering with an employee's exercise of such rights.

Directs the Secretary of Labor to exercise certain investigative and enforcement authority for employees covered by this Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, or the Government Employee Rights Act of 1991. Grants the same authority, for employees under their jurisdiction, to the Librarian of Congress, the Comptroller General, the Board of Directors of the Office of Compliance, and the Merit Systems Protection Board.

Authorizes civil actions by employees, individuals, or their representatives for damages or equitable relief against employers who violate this Act.

Waives a state's sovereign immunity with respect to a suit brought by an employee of a federally-assisted state program or activity for relief authorized under this Act.

Requires the Commissioner of Labor Statistics to compile information annually on paid sick time and the Comptroller General to study related matters.

Declares that nothing in this Act shall be construed to discourage employers from adopting or retaining more generous leave policies.

Actions Timeline

- **Feb 12, 2015:** Introduced in Senate
- **Feb 12, 2015:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.