December 11, 2019

The Honorable Carolyn Maloney
The Honorable Jim Jordan
House Committee on Oversight and Reform
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Maloney and Ranking Member Jordan:

HR Policy Association urges Congress to enact federal standards and procedures around paid leave for private-sector employees that would apply nationwide and eliminate the confusion from overlapping state and local mandates. We appreciate you advancing this dialogue at the hearing Tuesday.

HR Policy Association is the leading organization representing chief human resource officers of major employers. The Association consists of over 390 of the largest corporations doing business in the United States and globally, and these employers are represented in the organization by their most senior human resource executive.

For large companies, generous paid leave policies can provide a competitive advantage in the war for talent while also ensuring that their employees are able to achieve the work-life balance needed for a productive workforce. Thus, large employers are generally in the forefront of providing such benefits even in the absence of governmental mandates.

Paid leave laws are proliferating across the United States. The laws impact employers of all sizes, regardless of whether their operations are in only one state, in multiple states, or nationwide. It is increasingly challenging for companies in multiple jurisdictions to develop policies that comply with multiple laws. Without fail, and despite some overlap, each leave law seems to contain at least one provision that can impede the establishment of generous uniform leave benefits.

For large companies with a geographically dispersed workforce, the laws’ variations make administering benefits consistently for all employees very challenging. Moreover, companies would prefer to devote administrative time and costs to developing new ways to provide value to employees instead of having to fashion multiple paid leave benefit programs. More importantly, large companies with multiple operations at dispersed locations strive to build a common culture. A 2018 McKinsey report found: “Agile organizations create a cohesive community with a common culture.” This is undermined if employees on the same team have varying benefits and experiences.

When employees can easily understand a benefits program, it works best. We believe a national standard where categories and definitions track with the Family Medical Leave Act would provide consistent administrative underpinnings understandable for employees and manageable for employers.

We look forward to continuing to work with you on this and other issues of importance to American employers and our nation’s workforce.

Sincerely yours,

Daniel V. Yager
Chief Executive Officer
HR Policy Association