

**THIS YEAR,** we secured new victories for workers and their loved ones. We defended against attacks on hard-won rights. And we're mobilizing to fight harder than ever.



Thanks to your solidarity and support in 2024...

**1.8m**

**WORKERS IN MICHIGAN** had their right to paid sick time restored thanks to a Michigan Supreme Court ruling.



**3m**

**WORKERS IN MISSOURI, NEBRASKA, AND ALASKA** will gain the right to paid sick time to care for themselves or a loved one after voters approved new laws in November 2024.



**4m**

**NEW YORK CITY WORKERS** have new rights to take action in court when their paid sick time rights have been violated.



**40m**

**WORKERS** are now covered by paid family and medical leave programs in their state.

**\$600m**

**PAID TO COLORADO WORKERS** in paid family and medical leave benefits since the state's new program took effect in January.



**1,500**

**WORKERS AND STUDENTS** received direct legal assistance via our free, confidential work-family helpline.

We gave commentary about work-family issues in over

**100+**

**STORIES IN THE MEDIA.**



We defended and enforced the rights of pregnant and postpartum workers and students in

**12 COURT CASES.**

We spearheaded a digital awareness campaign that educated more than

**2m INDIVIDUALS**

about the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act.

# DEFENDING AND ENFORCING THE Pregnant Workers Fairness Act

As we highlighted earlier this year in our report, “Pregnant and Finally Protected,” the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act has been a lifeline for families—and especially for mothers of color in low wage and physically demanding jobs—in the year following its implementation. [Scan the code to read the report.](#)



Since the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) took effect in June 2023, the law has already served as a lifeline for pregnant and postpartum people in every corner of the country, allowing them to protect their health without fear of discrimination or job loss. But we continue to face a challenging legal landscape where rights like these are under attack. A Better Balance is mobilizing to defend the PWFA against extremist legal challenges from conservative state attorneys general and religious employers seeking to undermine its effectiveness.

In February 2024, a federal court in Texas ruled that the PWFA was enacted unconstitutionally, blocking enforcement of the law for Texas state employees. *Texas v. Garland* is now before the Fifth Circuit, and the judge’s ruling will have far-reaching implications for women and families nationwide. We are serving as an expert voice in defense of the law and submitted an amicus brief with the March of Dimes arguing that the PWFA is essential to the health and wellbeing of pregnant workers and babies. We are also helping to defend against attacks on key components of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission’s regulations for the PWFA around issues like the coverage of time off for abortion or fertility care in several other federal court cases.

Finally, our direct legal services continue to play an important role in enforcing the law. We are here for women like our client Arya Parks, who was illegally forced out of her job as a cashier at Speedway when she was pregnant and in need of reasonable accommodation for her health, like the ability to sit at her work station. “This had a huge impact on me and my family, including my 6-year-old son. We couldn’t afford basic things that we needed to survive,” wrote Arya. We are committed to securing relief for Arya and other workers whose rights have been violated, as we fight to protect the integrity of the law as a whole.

## PROTECTING LOCAL DEMOCRACY & RESISTING ATTACKS on the LGBTQ Community

Work-family justice is deeply intertwined with LGBTQ equity. In recent years, there has been an alarming and increasing trend of states “preempting,” or blocking, local LGBTQ equality protections, using the same playbook we have seen lawmakers use to block local paid sick time policies, environmental protections, and more. A Better Balance is dedicated to combating these efforts to undermine the rights of LGBTQ individuals and local democracy.

The transgender community especially has been the target of harmful and discriminatory legislation—414 anti-trans bills were introduced by state lawmakers in 2023 alone. Besides supporting efforts to combat these attacks, we are committed to supporting transgender workers with information about their rights in the workplace, including rights around taking time off to seek gender-affirming care, to manage pregnancy-related needs, or to care for themselves or their loved ones, including chosen family. To that end, we are developing a series of guides with our partners at the Transgender Law Center to help transgender workers understand their rights under state and federal workplace laws.

We are wholeheartedly in solidarity with all LGBTQ individuals and communities as we fight for fairer, safer, and more supportive workplaces for all.

**1/3 OF  
STATE-LEVEL  
ANTI-LGBTQ  
MEASURES**  
would block local  
laws to advance  
equity





# PASSING PAID SICK TIME ON THE BALLOT IN Nebraska, Alaska, and Missouri



Ballot initiatives are an important part of the democratic process, allowing voters to directly have a say on the laws that govern our workplaces and other important matters of justice. This Election Day, by large and decisive margins, voters in Nebraska, Alaska, and Missouri approved statewide paid sick time laws that will enable workers to take time to care for either themselves or a loved one, without sacrificing a paycheck—bringing the total number of states with paid sick time to 19. In Nebraska, paid sick time won by a margin of almost 3-to-1, securing victory by nearly 50 percentage points. In Alaska and Missouri, these new laws also include an increased minimum wage.

A Better Balance drafted and provided legal research and messaging for all three initiatives in coordination with statewide coalitions, supporting our partners on the ground as they fought tirelessly to protect the health and financial stability of millions of families. These state-level wins send a strong message that U.S. workers overwhelmingly support paid sick time, regardless of political party, geography, or other factors—clearly showing federal lawmakers a path forward on these popular, commonsense laws. We look forward to supporting implementation of these three new laws and building upon these bipartisan ballot wins in every corner of the country as we continue to push for paid sick time on the national level.

## EMPOWERING YOUNG WORKERS THROUGH Paid Leave & Other Rights



An estimated **1.6 million youth** (age 15-18) and **2 million young adults** (age 19-22) are family caregivers



**85% of Gen Z** says they have gone to work while sick in the past year



**Individuals under the age of 20** are the least likely to receive prenatal care in their first trimester

Young people are at a critical juncture in their lives and careers. While teenagers and young adults might be especially vulnerable in the workplace—disproportionately working in seasonal, part-time, and low-wage jobs—they also have tremendous power in shaping the future of work. Young people represent a growing percentage of family caregivers in the U.S., especially young people of color. A lack of access to paid leave means too many young workers will be forced to choose between caring for themselves and their loved ones, and their financial stability—often at a point in their lives when attachment to the workforce is especially vital for their overall economic security. Through reports, press opportunities, and digital campaigns, we are taking special measures to mobilize and educate young workers about the importance of paid leave and how they can get involved in the fight for work-family justice.



## OUR HELPLINE AT WORK: Kristina's\* Story

Every day, our free and confidential legal helpline assists workers across the country in understanding and exercising their workplace rights. Workers like Kristina\*, a scientist from New York who contacted us for information about her rights to take paid leave after welcoming her second child. Her company had erroneously led her to believe that she did not qualify for New York's Paid Family Leave program. After calling our helpline, Kristina was able to educate her employer about their legal obligations and apply in time to be approved for nine weeks of paid family leave to bond with her new child.



**“Before reaching out to A Better Balance, I felt really sad, desperate, and helpless... I desperately needed some time to just concentrate on my baby. My birthing experience ended up being an emergency that was life-threatening for my baby and me. Doctors and nurses kept on saying it’s a miracle that my baby and I survived.**

**Having had this experience, I am extra grateful for every moment that I get to spend with my baby during my leave. I am so grateful that A Better Balance stepped in to provide me with accurate information about my rights** which I had not received from my employer. I’m now four weeks into my leave and my baby has been sick the entire time—ear infections, high fever, etc.—and I am so grateful that I can simply nurse my baby and be with my baby to comfort.”

**— Kristina, New York**

(\*name changed for anonymity)



# A BETTER BALANCE IN THE NEWS: A Year in Headlines

In the media and beyond, we are shaping the public conversation, applying pressure on lawmakers, and shining a spotlight on the most pressing workplace issues affecting families today.



## BUSINESS INSIDER

Walmart and Amazon face legal trouble for using a points system to track and fire employees over absences

## THE Nation.

The EEOC has released new, much-needed protections for pregnant workers

## CNN

Employers must give their workers time off for an abortion or pregnancy care, according to final federal rule

## AP Associated Press

This law is a lifeline for pregnant workers even as an abortion dispute complicates its enforcement

## JEZEBEL

17 GOP attorneys general throw a fit over pregnant workers having rights

## GEORGIA RECORDER

Supporters of paid family leave for state workers applaud new Georgia law

## amNY

New York must update paid medical leave program to fit with the times

## Newsweek

Businesses must rally behind paid sick leave policies

## THE 19th

A Biden rule on heat safety at work could take years – but if you're pregnant, you're already protected

## The New York Times

Transfers and pay cuts: Pregnant officers accuse border agency of discrimination

## teenVOGUE

Paid leave is a priority for young workers, but most don't have access to it

## what to expect.

Here's what those parental leave terms really mean

## CNBC

The top 10 best states for working women: 'There are vast disparities' throughout the U.S., says expert

## HUFFPOST

Voters approve new paid sick leave laws in conservative states

Scan for all news from 2024:



# 10 Years OF FIGHTING FOR FAMILIES IN THE SOUTH

We've helped  
to pass  
**28**  
supportive  
workplace  
laws in the  
South since  
our Southern  
Office's founding.



2024 marks ten years of A Better Balance's Southern Office, which has grown from one person in Nashville to five staff members in three different states. We have spent the last decade building alliances with communities and partners in the South, helping to advance work-family policy and move the needle in spite of seemingly insurmountable challenges, and defending against policies that would harm families and marginalized communities.

The South faces some of the highest rates of poverty in the country, an acute Black maternal and infant health crisis, and an overall lack of access to protective workplace laws. But for the last ten years, we have been working every day with organizers and advocates in the South to achieve important victories—from passing several statewide Pregnant Workers Fairness Act laws to fighting back against harmful preemption. More recently, with our help, Southern states have been leading the way when it comes to providing paid parental leave for state government employees, including in Georgia, South Carolina, and Tennessee. We also helped our partners in New Orleans to pass a Workers Bill of Rights via ballot initiative in the 2024 election. Despite an increasingly extreme legal landscape—one that is far from limited to the South—we will never stop fighting for Southern workers and families on the federal, state, and local levels.

## AFTER THE 2024 ELECTION, What's Next?

We know communities are hurting, and the years ahead will bring new threats and legal challenges that undermine justice and democracy. We also know that work-family policies are overwhelmingly popular among the public across party lines, and we will work around the clock to ensure workers' rights are advanced and protected. A Better Balance is here and ready to fight day in and day out to protect workers under the law.

**Our work is only possible with your support. Over the next year, with your help, we will, among other things:**

- Advocate for policies that continue advancing work-family justice on the federal, state, and local levels, centering racial, gender, LGBTQ, and disability justice at every turn.
- Vigorously implement, enforce, and defend the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, PUMP for Nursing Mothers Act, state paid leave and paid sick time laws, and other vital workplace protections.
- Redouble our efforts to provide direct legal support and representation through our free, confidential work-family helpline.
- Continue to build a strong public narrative to build support for these essential rights.



### DONATE:

[abetterbalance.org/donate](https://abetterbalance.org/donate)



### STAY INFORMED:

 [ABetterBalance](#)

 [A Better Balance](#)

 [A\\_Better\\_Balance](#)

**CALL  
FOR HELP**

**Free, confidential legal helpline: 1-833-NEED-ABB**