

(Washington) – Today **Congressman John B. Larson** released the following statement on the 20th Anniversary of the Family Medical Leave Act:

"Thanks to the extraordinary efforts of United States Senator Chris Dodd and Dr. Edward Zigler of Yale University, close to 100 million Americans have benefited from the Family Medical Leave Act, underscoring its importance in assuring our working families are treated fairly and provided support when they need it most. For 20 years the Family Medical Leave Act has provided job security to countless mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, children and grandchildren caring for a relative. For 20 years we have shown our commitment to working families across this nation.

"The Family Medical Leave Act puts people first. Prior to its passage, our country was sadly behind others in how we treated hard-working citizens forced to make the painful choice between their jobs and caring for their family. Rarely could an employee take protected time off for an illness, pregnancy, or to care for a sick family member."

The FMLA ensures that men and women can retain their jobs while taking time off to care for family members who are ill, newborn children, or their own medical conditions. Currently the act applies to all public agencies, private sector employers who employ 50 or more employees, and spouses, children, parents and next of kin of covered military servicemembers with a serious injury or illness. Larson also wants to acknowledge the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women who in 1987 played a leading role in pushing through the first family and medical leave act in the nation.

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