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**HEADLINE:** Poll finds overwhelming **NJ** support for **paid family leave**

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**BODY:**

Nearly 80 percent of New Jerseyans support giving workers up to 12 weeks of **paid leave** to care for a sick **family** member or new child, according to a poll released Wednesday.

The survey conducted by the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling at Rutgers University found 78 percent of respondents supported a **paid family leave** proposal being considered by lawmakers. Some 16 percent opposed it.

"That is resounding support and we find it very encouraging," said Jon Shure, president of New Jersey Policy Perspective, a liberal policy group that has joined with a coalition of organized labor and groups that advocate for women, minorities, children and the poor to back the proposal.

New Jersey would be the second state to adopt **paid family leave**. California lets workers take six weeks off.

The poll of 809 residents was conducted from Oct. 29-31 and has a sampling error margin of about 3 percentage points.

Under the **family leave** plan crafted by state Sen. Stephen Sweeney, workers who take **leave** would receive two-thirds of their weekly wages, up to \$488 per week. It would be funded by a 0.1 percent charge against a worker's wages.

Businesses oppose Sweeney's bill, but Gov. Jon S. Corzine's office is considering it.

The poll found that 23 percent of respondents needed to take time off from work in the past five years to care for either a sick **family** member or a newborn or adopted child, with 42 percent taking less than two weeks and 22 percent taking three to six weeks.

"Most workers are not going to take **family leave**," Shure said. "Most who do take it aren't going to take 12 weeks, but for those for whom life imposes the worst-case scenario, there will be income security and peace of mind."