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Insurance would help workers

To the Editor:

Times have changed, but you couldn't tell that from Paul Havemann's recent letter blasting family leave insurance. Today, far more women work, there are more single-parent households and in many families, parents are each working more than one job making ends meet. All they want is a little help balancing work and family --and that's what family leave insurance would do.

Working people would contribute on average less than a dollar a week to a fund that would enable anyone who had to take time off to care for a sick child, spouse or parent to receive two-thirds of their pay. Employers would pay nothing into the fund, and workers could only take leave if a doctor confirmed the need.

When the family leave legislation was up for a state Senate committee hearing recently, several small businesspeople testified about how much this proposal would help them. They understand that it will allow them to compete with bigger firms, and to do right by their workers. If employers find they can't hold open the job of someone on leave, they wouldn't have to -- but at least those people would have some money to pay their bills. Too often today, working people dealing with the illness of a loved one must make a choice no one should have to face. Family leave insurance helps people support their families, which is why a recent Eagleton Poll found 78 percent of New Jerseyans support it.

LAURIE PETTINE

Morris County NOW

Mothers' and Caregivers' Task Force
