

*Administration of Barack Obama, 2013*

**Statement on the 20th Anniversary of the Family and Medical Leave Act**  
*February 5, 2013*

Twenty years ago today, the Family and Medical Leave Act became law, and we took a groundbreaking step forward for America's workers and families. Before the FMLA, taking time off to care for yourself or a family member may have meant risking a job or derailing a career, especially for women, who often faced discrimination and stereotypes in the workplace. But this law helped level the playing field by extending protections to both women and men so that more workers could meet their responsibilities to themselves and their families without jeopardizing their livelihood.

Two decades later, we should take pride in the law's success, and I am proud of the work my administration has done to expand the FMLA's protections to military families and airline workers. But we also know there is still more work to do. Not all employees are covered by the law, and oftentimes workers cannot afford to take unpaid leave. So as we mark this anniversary, let us also recommit ourselves to the values that inspired the law and redouble our efforts on behalf of fairer workplaces and healthier, more secure families.

*Categories:* Statements by the President : Family and Medical Leave Act, 20th anniversary.

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