



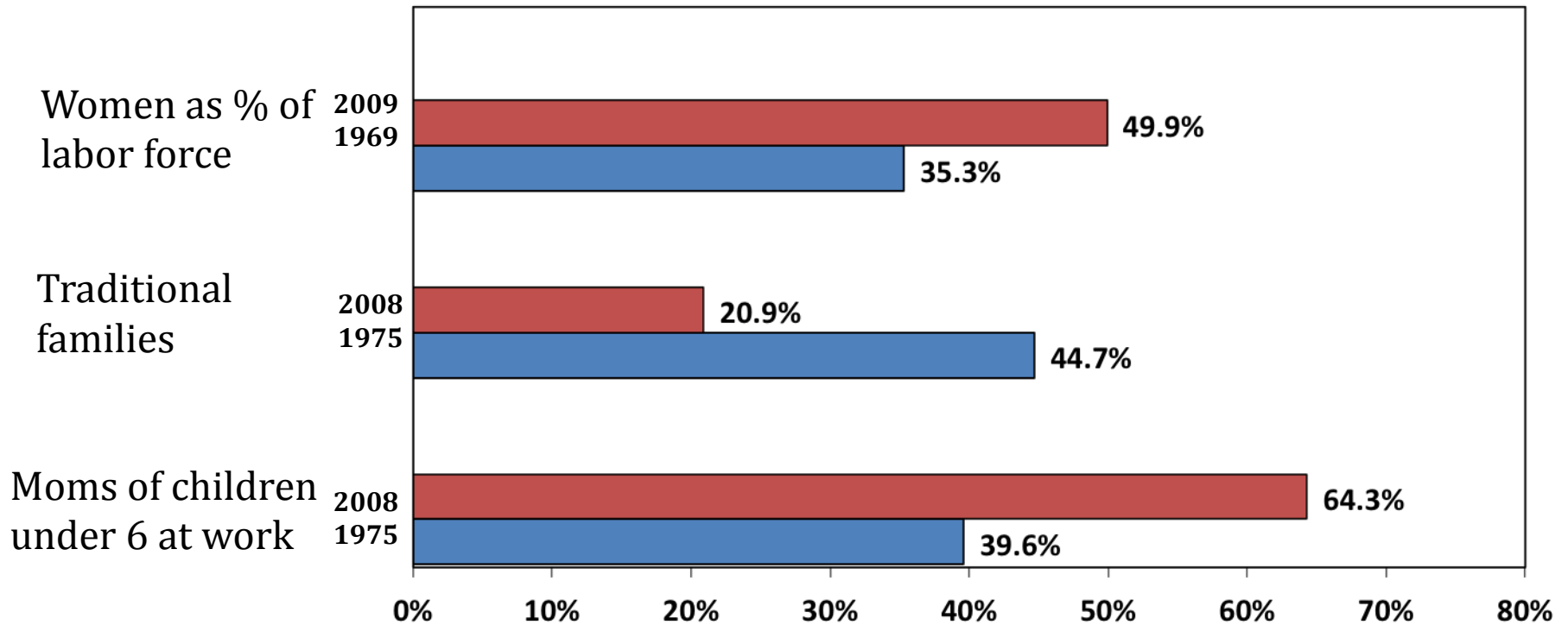
# **For the Children: Why Work-Family Policies Matter**

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# The world of work and family has fundamentally changed

**For the first time, women make up half of all workers**



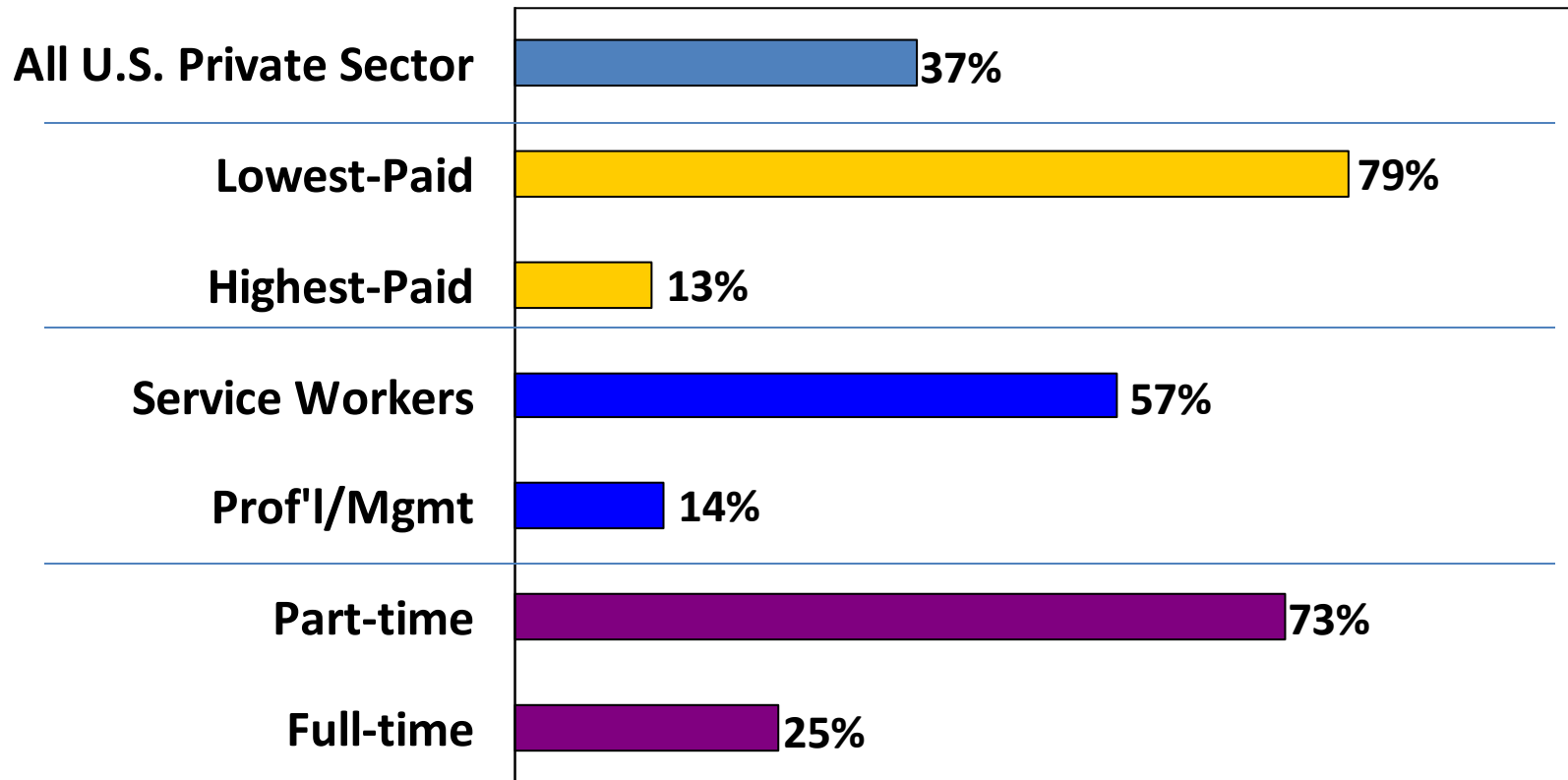
Source: *The Shriver Report, "The New Breadwinners"* (2009)

# Workplace policies fail workers

- About **four in ten private sector workers nationwide do not have paid sick days**. Many more lack sick time that can be used to care for a sick child.
- **Only 11% of workers have access to paid family leave** through their employer.
- Only **half of workers have access to unpaid time off** through the federal **Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA)** for serious illness and caregiving.
- Unpredictable, unstable and rigid schedules are common – and nothing prevents employers from **retaliating against workers who request or need flexibility and predictability**.

# Lower-wage, service sector and part-time workers are least likely to have paid sick days

Percent of Private Sector Workers Without Access to Paid Sick Time



# Lack of paid sick days has real consequences for parents and kids

**“My daughter is asthmatic. I have 8 hours [of leave] left to last me until December. If you call in, you’re written up. If you’re written up twice, you lose your job.”**

- Dallas insurance agency worker

**“This is not a common cold, it’s serious—it will affect his whole life.”**

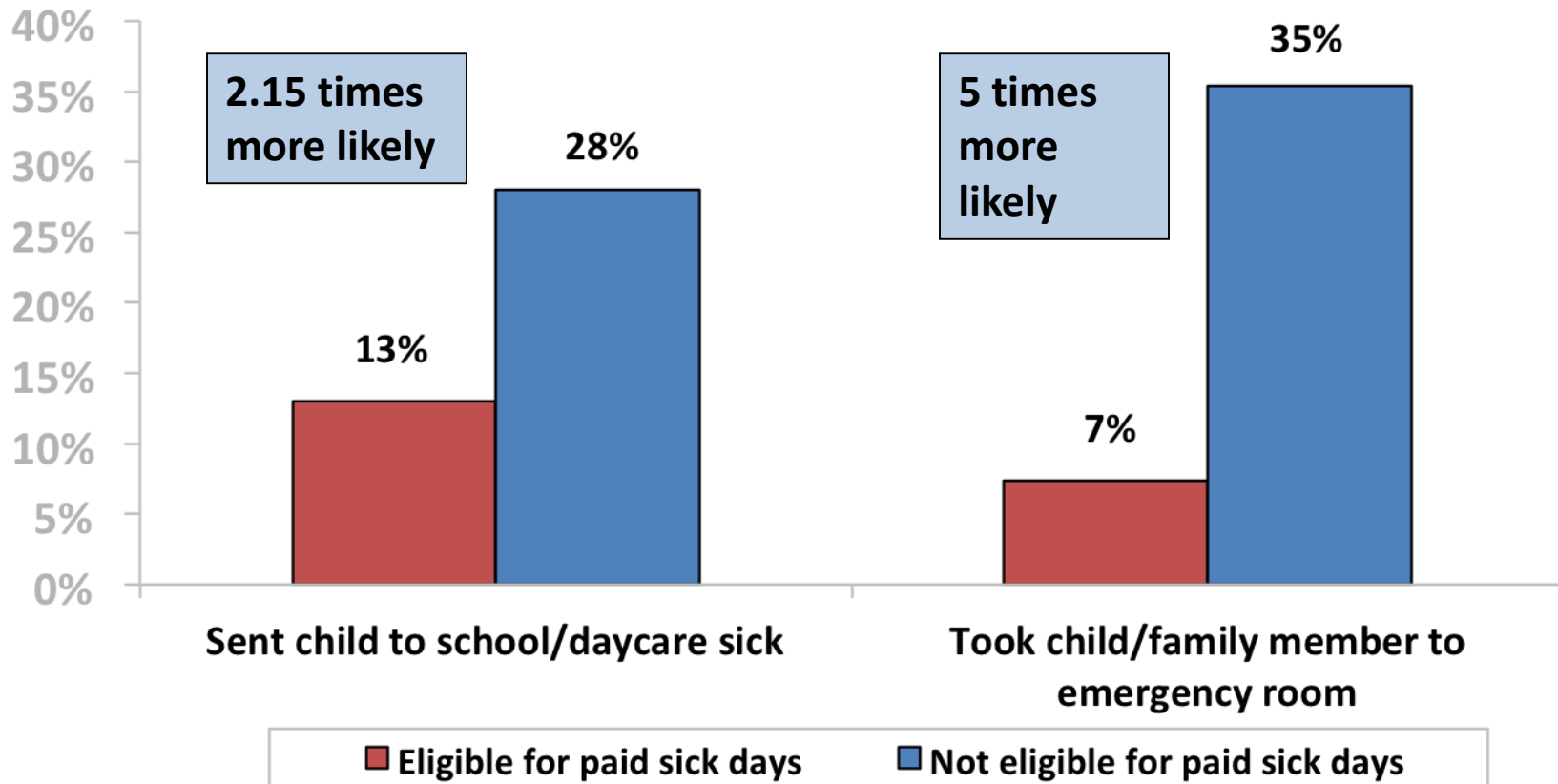
- Los Angeles medical lab assistant, fired for taking sick time to obtain son’s autism diagnosis

**“I have sent [my daughter] to school borderline sick. ...[S]he had pink eye, I think... I wiped her eyes and shoved her off to school.”**

- New York City non-profit worker

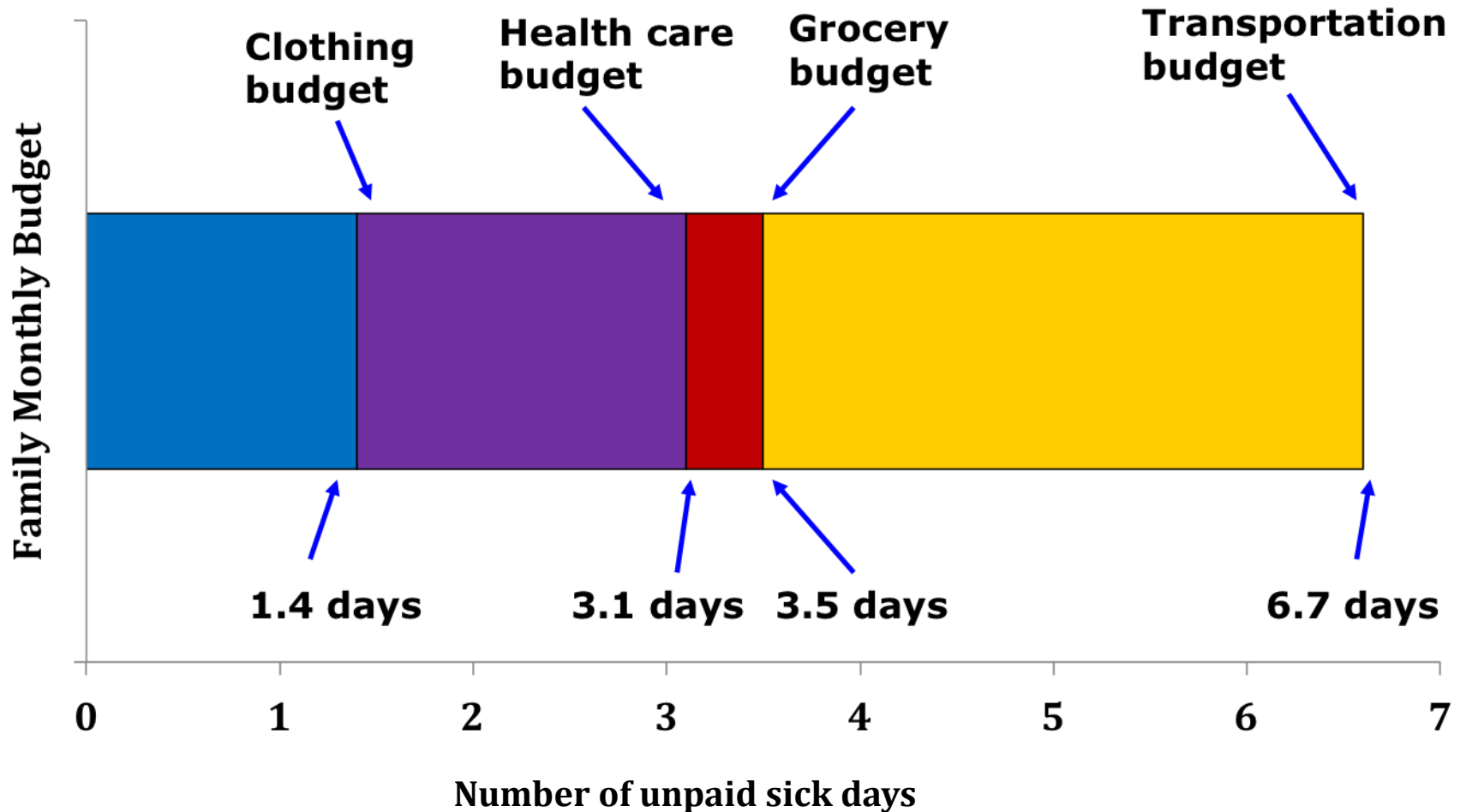
# Lack of paid sick days means more sick kids at school and in emergency rooms

Parents with children under 18



# When workers stay home, a few unpaid sick days can jeopardize basic family necessities

Average two-worker family with no paid sick days



# Lack of access to paid leave harms parents and children

- Paid leave has been associated with declines in infant and child **mortality rates**.
- Mothers' return to employment too early after childbirth is associated with **decreased cognitive development** for children down the line.
- Early return to work diminishes mothers' ability to **breastfeed** children.



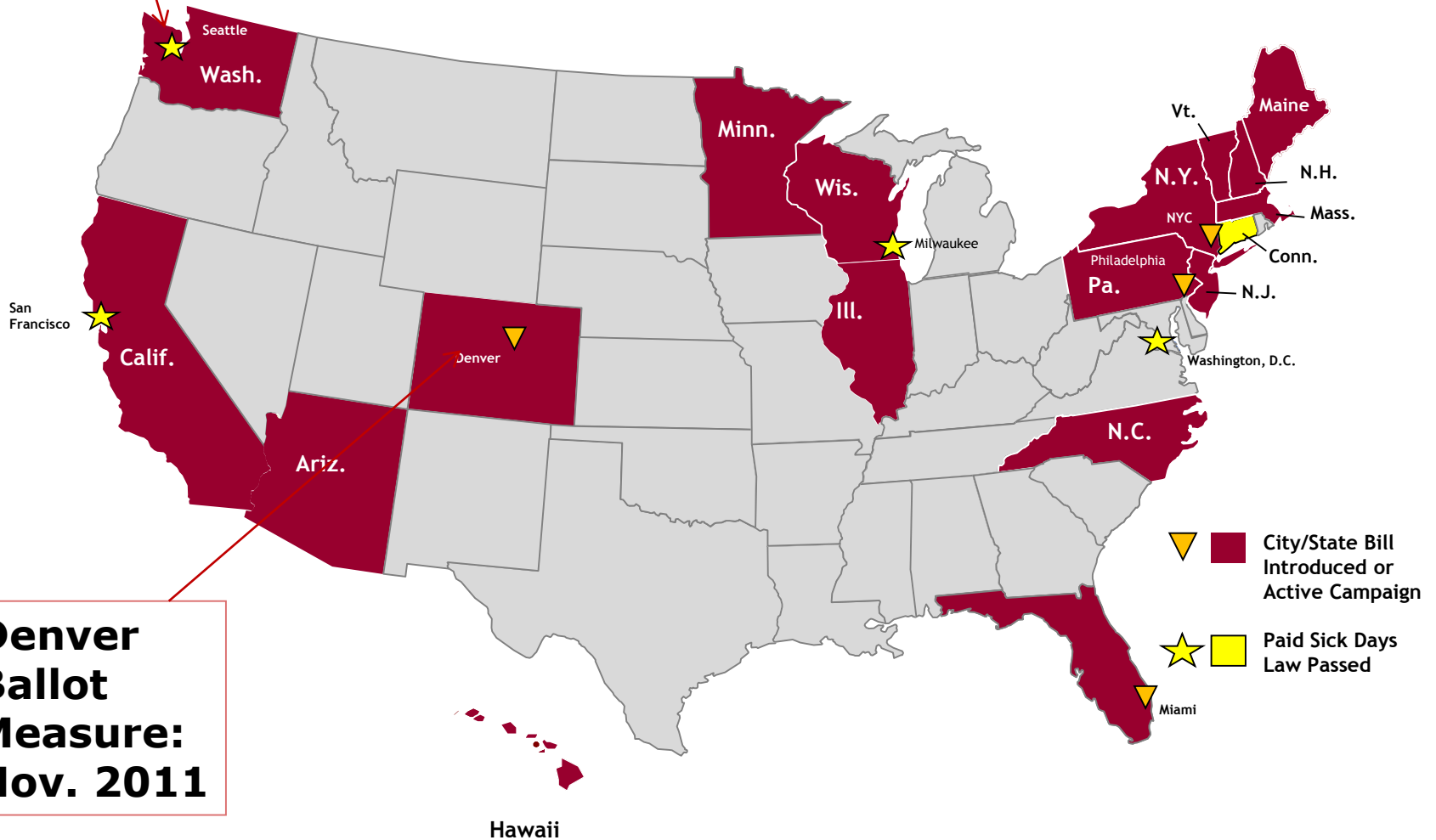
# Policy Solutions: Paid Sick Days

- **Healthy Families Act (H.R. 1876/S. 984)**
  - Sponsors: Rep. Rosa DeLauro, Sen. Tom Harkin
  - 1 hour of paid sick time earned for every 30 hours worked, up to 7 days per year
  - Accrues to workers to care for themselves or family members, and for doctor's appointments
  - Would allow victims of domestic violence to seek assistance
  - Non-retaliation provision
  - Businesses that offer equivalent PTO for the same purposes do not need to offer additional time off

# Paid sick days in 2011

## State/local legislation and campaigns

**Seattle City Council: passed Sept. 2011!**



# Kids benefit when parents have paid sick days

- **Sick kids.** Parents are able to care for sick children at home and get them treatment, shortening the duration of illness.
- **Well kids.** Paid sick days help parents get their kids necessary immunizations and well-child visits.
- **Chronic conditions.** Sick days help parents address their children's chronic conditions, preventing manageable problems from escalating.

*Healthy children are more focused, miss fewer days of school and experience fewer behavioral problems.*

# Paid Leave Policies in the States

- California's and New Jersey's statewide paid family leave insurance programs:
  - 6 weeks of leave
  - Funded by employee contributions
  - To be used to care for new child or ill family member
  - Build on existing state systems for temporary disability insurance

# Federal-Level Paid Leave Proposals

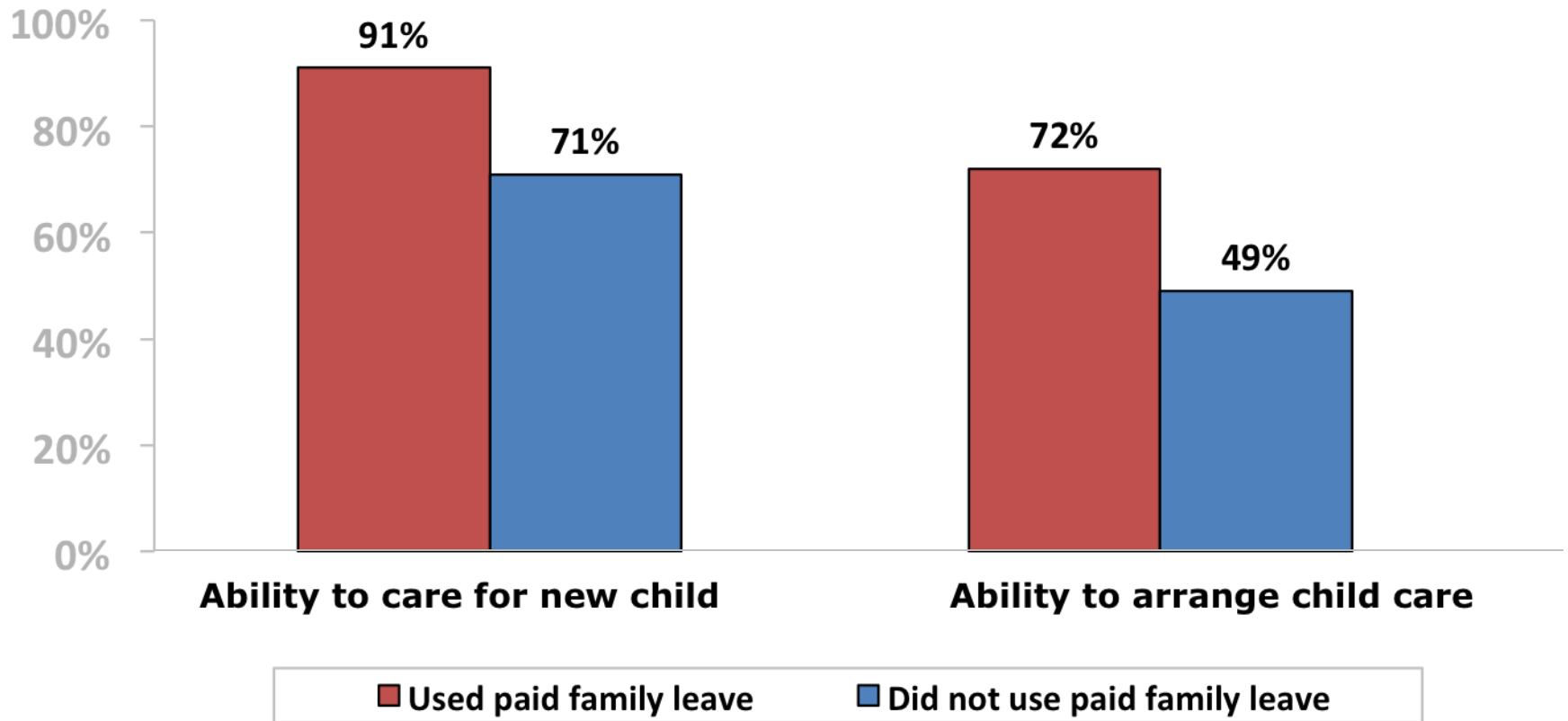
- **State Paid Leave Fund**
- **National Paid Family Leave Insurance** proposal (expected introduction in Fall 2011)
- **Federal Employees Paid Parental Leave Act** (H.R. 616, Rep. Maloney)

# Children benefit when parents have paid family leave

- Seriously ill children recover faster with a parent's care – hospital stays are reduced by **31 percent**.
- Newborns whose mothers take longer leaves before returning to work are **more likely to be taken to the pediatrician for regular checkups** and **more likely to be breastfed**.
- Fathers who take leave are more likely to stay involved in their child's care.

# California's paid family leave program promotes good child care

**Percentage of workers in low-quality jobs reporting a positive effect on:**



# California's paid family leave program has promoted breastfeeding among new mothers

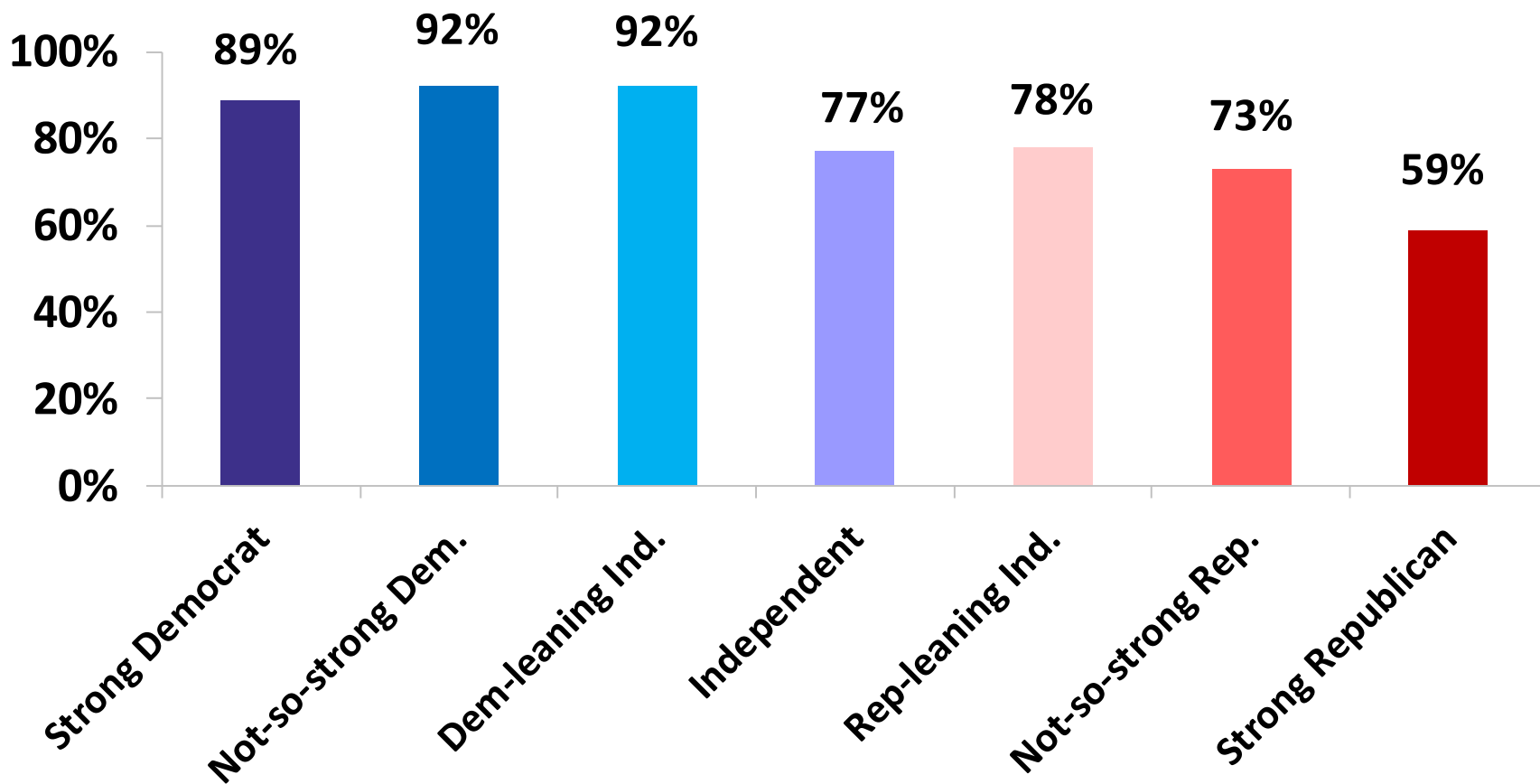
**Median duration of breastfeeding (number of weeks):**





# Support for a national paid sick days law extends across all partisan groups

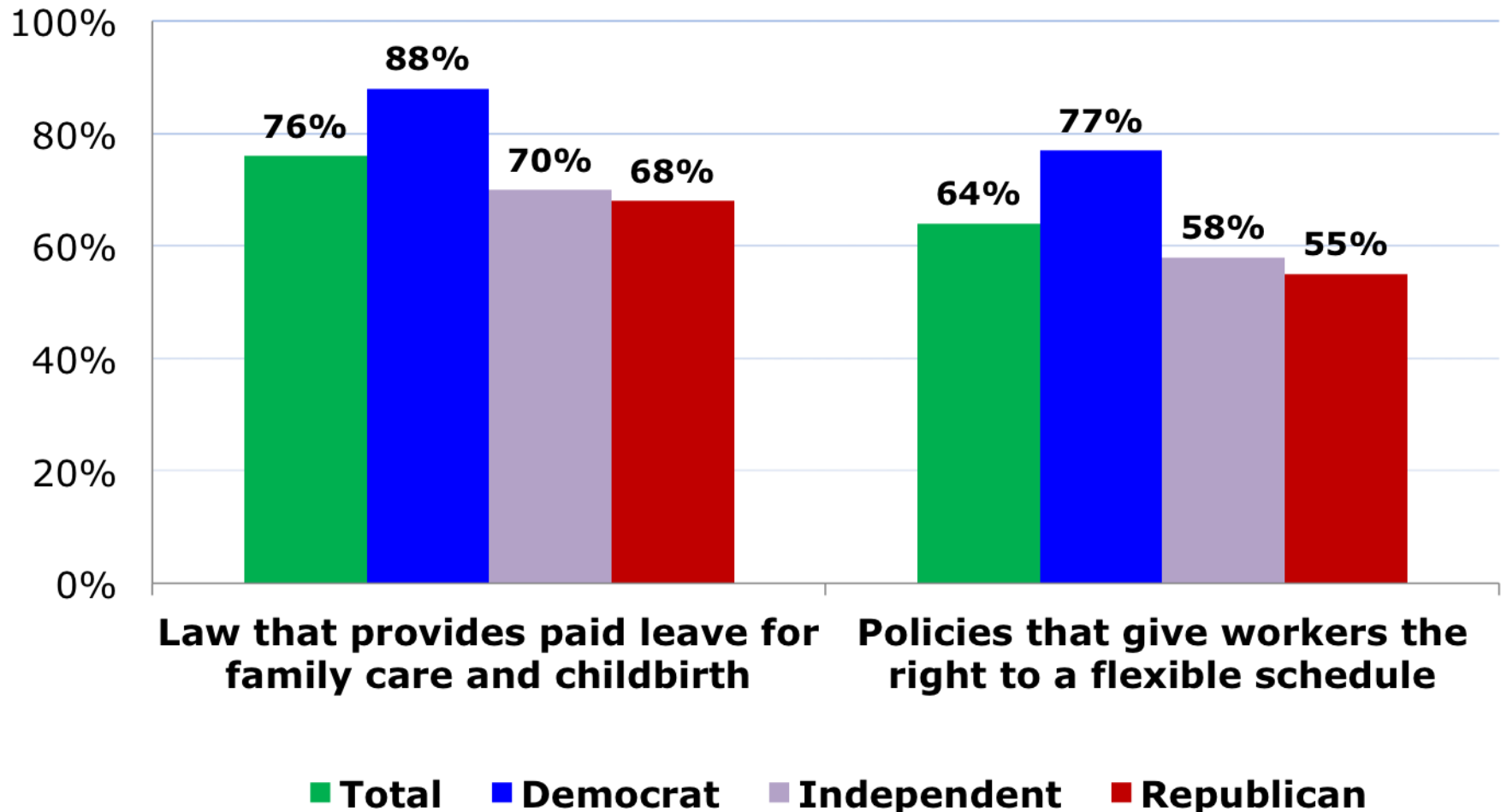
Do you favor or oppose a law guaranteeing all workers a minimum number of paid sick days to care for themselves or immediate family members?



Source: NORC/University of Chicago poll (6/2010)

# Work-family policies are popular across all partisan groups

Would you support:



# For More Information

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