



REPRODUCTIVE EQUITY NOW

To: Chair James Crighton, Vice Chair Lino Avellani, and the House Labor, Industrial, and Rehabilitative Services Committee

Re: Testimony in Opposition of HB 1250, relative to notice, documentation, and job reinstatement requirements under leave of absence for childbirth, postpartum, and pediatric medical appointments.

Date: January 20, 2026

Position: INEXPEDIENT TO LEGISLATE

Background

Reproductive Equity Now works across New England to make equitable access to the full spectrum of reproductive and maternal health care a reality for all people. Critical to this work is ensuring that every Granite Stater choosing to start or grow their family can raise their children in supportive and healthy environments.

By establishing narrow, common-sense workplace protections for new parents, RSA 275:37-f, which became effective on January 1, allows new parents to prioritize their health and the health of their newborns without risking their jobs and economic security for their families. This statute grants new parents limited, unpaid time off for postpartum and pediatric appointments within the first year following the birth of their child, and in doing so the law supports new parents' ability to remain in the workforce and to achieve healthy outcomes for themselves and their infants. HB 1250 would render RSA 275:37-f ineffective, by offering employers several loopholes to avoid compliance with the law. For this reason, Reproductive Equity Now firmly opposes to this bill.

HB 1250 thwarts bipartisan progress made last year through Momnibus 2.0

This past June, Governor Ayotte signed “Momnibus 2.0” into law, a bipartisan, comprehensive maternal and infant health package included in the state’s Fiscal Year 2026-2027 budget.¹ The new law established that employers with more than 20 employees must grant their employees 25 hours of *unpaid* time off for an employee’s own medical appointments for childbirth, postpartum care, or the employee’s infant’s pediatric appointments within the first year of their child’s life.² The statute requires eligible employees to provide reasonable notice before requesting leave and allows employers to request documentation from their employees to verify proper use of the leave policy.³ Lastly, the law states that employers must reinstate employees to their original position

¹ See *Providing maternal depression screening for new mothers; increasing access to health care services for new mothers; enabling new parents to attend infant pediatric medical appointments; and developing a plan for perinatal peer support certification*, H.B. 246, 2025 Leg. Sess. (N.H.), enacted in H.B. 2, 2025 Leg. (N.H. 2025).

² N.H. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 275:37-f.

³ *Id.*

upon completion of leave taken under this policy.⁴

HB 1250 undercuts RSA 275:37-f by granting employers several outs from complying with the law. Firstly, it states that employers are only required to reinstate an employee after taking leave under this policy “if the job is still available and doing so would not unduly disrupt the operations of the employer.”⁵ As previously mentioned, the current policy established under RSA 275:37 grants eligible employees 25 hours of unpaid leave time, which equates to roughly three full days of work. Not only does the aforementioned bill language disincentivize employees from taking lawful leave due to uncertainty and fear about if they can return to their jobs, but it also claims that taking just three days of time away from work to care for an infants’ high fever or complications following childbirth could be grounds for losing your job. Secondly, the bill states that employees must provide 15 days notice before utilizing leave protected under RSA 275:37-f.⁶ This requirement is unreasonable, for parents do not and cannot know 15 days ahead of time that their newborn will come down with an illness. Lastly, the bill opens the door for an employer to amend their employee handbook to simply state that this leave is against their workplace policy.⁷ **HB 1250 would functionally undo the reasonable workplace protections for new parents signed into law this past summer and effective just this month.**

Current law is beneficial for Granite State employers and Granite State families

RSA 275:37-f as enacted is beneficial for Granite State employers, New Hampshire’s workforce, and the economic stability of Granite State families. On average, 1 in 4 women exit the workforce within their first year of motherhood.⁸ As more American moms continue to exit the labor market due in large part to employers not creating policies that sensibly accommodate their employee’s increased caretaking responsibilities, research shows that workplaces with family-friendly policies achieve increased employee retention and productivity.⁹

In 2024 New Hampshire, a median household income in New Hampshire fell \$2,000 short of covering basic costs for a four-person family.¹⁰ The majority of New Hampshire families rely on a dual income to try and make ends meet, with 129,400 Granite State children living in a two-parent

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ See *relative to notice, documentation, and job reinstatement requirements under leave of absence for childbirth, postpartum, and pediatric medical appointments*, H.B. 1250-FN, 2026 Reg. Sess. (N.H. 2026).

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ Ana Júlia Calegari Torres et al., *The Impact of Motherhood on Women’s Career Progression: A Scoping Review of Evidence-Based Interventions*, 14 J. BEHAV. SCIENCES 275 (Mar. 26, 2024), <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC11047346/>.

⁹ See Abha Bhattarai, *Mothers are leaving the workforce, erasing pandemic gains*, WASH. POST (Aug. 11, 2025), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2025/08/11/mothers-leaving-workforce-large-numbers/>; Compare with Julene Reese, *Research Shows Family-Friendly Policies Increase Workplace Satisfaction*, UTAH STATE TODAY (Dec. 2, 2020), <https://www.usu.edu/today/story/research-shows-family-friendly-policies-increase-workplace-satisfaction>.

¹⁰ Nicole Heller et al., *Affordability Eroded: Changes to the Cost of Living in New Hampshire*, N.H. FISCAL POL’Y INST., (Oct. 20, 2025), <https://nhfpi.org/resource/affordability-eroded-changes-to-the-cost-of-living-in-new-hampshire/>.

household with both parents in the labor force.¹¹ Additionally, 57,400 children live with a single working parent.¹² **To support the economic stability, health, and wellbeing of New Hampshire's families and children, it is imperative that the Legislature does not advance policies like HB 1250 that pit mothers' and single parents' participation in the workforce against their ability to attend to the health of their children.**

Current law is beneficial for Granite State moms and infants

RSA 275:37-f as enacted is beneficial for the health of Granite State moms and their newborns. The postpartum period is a critical transitional event for both a mother and her infant. Nearly two-thirds of maternal deaths occur during the postpartum period up to one year after birth, making it critical for new moms to have access to the postpartum health care they need.¹³ As for infant health, research shows that sick children recover faster when cared for by their parents. The presence of a parent shortens a child's hospital stay by 31%. Additionally, active parental involvement in a child's hospital care may head off future health care needs, partly due to increased parental education and awareness.¹⁴

Conclusion

Reproductive Equity Now encourages your opposition to HB 1250 and is committed to working further with legislators, community leaders, and advocates alike to ensure its defeat. We thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to provide testimony and urge you to reject this proposal.

Respectfully submitted,

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¹¹ N.H. FISCAL POL'Y INST., *Facts for Father's Day: New Hampshire's Dads in 2025*, (June 13, 2025), <https://nhfpi.org/blog/facts-for-fathers-day-new-hampshires-dads-in-2025/>.

¹² *Id.*

¹³ Eugene Declercq & Laurie C. Zephyrin, *Maternal Mortality in the United States, 2025*, THE COMMONWEALTH FUND, (July 29, 2025), <https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/issue-briefs/2025/jul/maternal-mortality-united-states-2025>.

¹⁴ JODY HEYMANN & ALISON EARLE, *RAISING THE GLOBAL FLOOR: DISMANTLING THE MYTH THAT WE CAN'T AFFORD GOOD WORKING CONDITIONS FOR EVERYONE* (2009).