Executive Summary

Paid Leave: Good for Families, Businesses, and the Economy

A larger, more productive workforce is critical to economic recovery in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Creating a supportive work environment that respects the work-life balance of working parents will help businesses attract and retain the best talent. To help employees balance the responsibilities of work and family while financially supporting their families, the Clark-Fox Policy Institute has produced a three-part policy brief focused on family-friendly business policies.

The first brief, available now, describes the realities that more than two-thirds of American workers face bringing home a new baby or caring for a sick family member without access to paid leave. Highlights from Paid Leave: Good for Families, Businesses, and the Economy reveal:

- **Economic and Health Benefits:** Paid leave is shown to bolster the health and productivity of the workforce, reduce postpartum depression, and alleviate financial strains on families, contributing to economic growth.

- **Cost Savings for Businesses:** Implementing paid leave can curtail employee turnover costs, which average 20% of an employee's annual salary, and potentially decrease moms leaving the workforce by nearly 20%.

- **Wage Disparities and Inequality:** The absence of paid leave disproportionately impacts low-wage workers, who are primarily women of color, with 94% lacking access to this crucial benefit.

- **Inclusive Family Support:** The policy brief advocates for the extension of paid leave to fathers and same-sex families, promoting gender-neutral language and inclusive policies to support diverse family dynamics.

The institute recommends a minimum of eight weeks of paid leave for a variety of family care needs, ensuring job and income protection post-leave, and fostering a workplace culture that values all forms of caregiving. These recommendations are based on a blend of scientific research and insights from community voices, including a listening session with working parents facilitated by the Gateway Early Childhood Alliance.

Gary Parker, PhD, Director of the Clark-Fox Policy Institute, emphasizes the immediate opportunity for businesses to adopt these practices without waiting for legislative mandates. "Parents shouldn't have to choose between their careers and family responsibilities. By adopting paid leave policies, businesses can directly support working families and drive economic growth," Parker states.

For further details on the policy brief and to access resources on advocating for paid leave, visit Paid Leave: Good for Families, Businesses, and the Economy.

About the Clark-Fox Policy Institute

The Clark-Fox Policy Institute is dedicated to child wellbeing through the development and dissemination of evidence-informed policy. Building on the foundation of scientific research, the Institute layers the empirical data with the lived experience of the impacted population. Science alone cannot drive the policymaking process, and the Institute is committed to working with communities whose voices are often left unheard. To achieve this, the Institute serves as a regional convener and a catalyst for addressing pressing social issues.