COMMONWEALTH FOUNDATION | TALKING POINTS

The Family Care Act (HB 181)

HB181 WILL FINANCIALLY BURDEN EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES IN OUR STRUGGLING ECONOMY

- This bill forces employers to provide an employee benefit that many already offer. In fact, employers are increasingly providing paid family leave due to market demand.
- Businesses will have to cover this unplanned mandated expense by eliminating jobs or increasing prices—neither of which is ideal in our current economic situation.
- This proposed $4.3 billion payroll tax hike will lower the take-home pay of working families, who are already struggling to afford increased living costs and out-of-control inflation.
- Amid our country's current economic woes, it is unethical and fiscally irresponsible to burden taxpayers and working families with a $4.3 billion tax hike.

HB181 RELIES ON AN ALREADY-INUNDATED, POORLY FUNCTIONING BUREAUCRACY

- HB181 will depend on an unreliable state agency, the Department of Labor and Industry (L&I), to administer it.
- As of March 2023, L&I is still processing a backlog of 35,000 unemployment claims—many dating back to the pandemic. Already mired in bureaucratic red tape, L&I will be even more inundated with unemployment claims if a recession occurs.
- L&I is unresponsive to public need. If you need assistance, you will be placed on hold for at least an hour before speaking to an L&I representative. We can't expect an already-poorly responsive government bureaucracy to handle thousands of family leave claims.
- If L&I cannot handle its current workload, why would anyone believe it can handle more?

PAID FAMILY LEAVE IS COMMENDABLE; FORCING TAXPAYERS TO SUBSIDIZE IS NOT

- While many Americans support paid family leave, many more oppose forcing others—especially those who don't use the benefit—to pay for it with more money from their paychecks.
- According to a recent poll, 62 percent of Americans oppose paid family leave programs if "families who don't use the program would still be required to pay higher taxes to provide benefits to others."