



# Leadership Conference on Civil Rights

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Wade J. Henderson

December 5, 2007

The Honorable Edward M. Kennedy  
Chairman  
Committee on Health, Education,  
Labor and Pensions  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Michael B. Enzi  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Health, Education,  
Labor and Pensions  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Kennedy and Ranking Member Enzi:

On behalf of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR), the nation's oldest, largest, and most diverse civil and human rights coalition, with nearly 200 member organizations, we urge you to support the Working Families Flexibility Act. The bill is a positive step toward giving working people a manageable work schedule that allows them to both be good employees and spend time with their families. The Working Families Flexibility Act allows employees to request, free from fear of reprisal, a different work schedule or location, and it requires employers to give these requests meaningful consideration.

Working people, particularly immigrants, people of color, and women, are increasingly forced to work multiple jobs to make ends meet, and to juggle significant work and family responsibilities. By giving workers and employers the chance to make mutually satisfactory arrangements on work schedule and location, this bill, along with other work and family priorities such as guaranteed sick time and paid family and medical leave, will help to forge a more humane workplace.

The Working Families Flexibility Act forbids employer retaliation for worker requests for flexible hours, thus allaying employees' fear that a mere request for a flexible work schedule could be held against them. The bill also mandates that employers meet with employees who make a request and give written reasons if it is denied, ensuring that employers give real consideration to these requests. Thus it is good for both workers and businesses because, in conjunction with other workplace standards like paid sick days, it presents an opportunity to boost workers' productivity by making the workplace healthier and improving morale.

For many, making ends meet in today's economy is a challenging task, and too often, workers must sacrifice their family life to meet job demands – even though a more flexible arrangement might have been reached if they had been able to have a meaningful conversation with their employer. This bill sets up a process for such conversations and helps make the workplace more receptive to the needs of working families, and we urge you to support it. Should you require further information or have any questions, please contact Paul Edenfield, Counsel and Policy Analyst, at (202) 263-2852, regarding this issue.

Sincerely,

Wade Henderson  
President & CEO

Nancy Zirkin  
Vice President / Director of Public Policy

cc: Members of Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions

"Equality In a Free, Plural, Democratic Society"