

# Chris Dodd

U.S. SENATOR FROM CONNECTICUT



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **DODD APPLAUDS EXPANSION OF FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE BENEFITS TO GAY AND LESBIAN WORKERS**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Senator Chris Dodd (D-CT), author of the landmark Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), released the following statement today on the Department of Labor’s decision to provide FMLA benefits to gay and lesbian workers, as well as other caretakers, to care for their children. Under the new guidelines, gay and lesbian workers will now be afforded the opportunity to take time off to care for their partner’s newborn, adopted, or sick child. Dodd supports providing the full benefits of the FMLA law to gay and lesbian couples.

*“Over 20 years ago, I wrote this law to bring a sense of fairness to the workplace and ensure that mothers and fathers were protected if they needed time off from work to care for a loved one or a newborn child,” **said Dodd.** “Today’s decision is in line with the spirit of the law and will provide gay and lesbian workers the rights they deserve to care for their children.*

*“However, this is just one more step on the long haul towards guaranteeing equal rights for the LGBT community. There are still too many obstacles, laws, and regulations that restrict the rights of gay and lesbian Americans, and we must keep up the fight to break down those barriers to equality,” **Dodd continued.***

The new guidance from the Department of Labor would also benefit children who have adults other than a biological parent or legal guardian providing care for them, including caretakers of children whose parents may be sick or serving in the United States military and, therefore, unable to care for the child.

Since enacted, the Family Medical Leave Act has allowed more than 50 million workers to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave if they are ill or if they need to care for a sick family member or new child. Unfortunately, millions of additional working men and women who need family leave cannot take it because they cannot afford to go without pay. For that reason, Dodd believes our nation’s workers should have access to paid family and medical leave. He has been a champion of the rights and needs of working people throughout his career and believes that no one should have to choose between their job and the family that they love.