

## **Family Leave Bill Introduced in Colorado Legislature**

On January 10, 2018, a bill was introduced in the Colorado Legislature which would require employers to provide up to 12 weeks of medical leave to their employees, as well as a wage replacement fund for those taking leave.

HB 18-1001, the Family and Medical Leave Insurance Act (“FAMLI”), would require every employer in Colorado, regardless of how many employees the employer employs, to allow its employees to take up to 12 weeks of leave in connection with the employee’s serious health condition or that of a family member, birth or adoption, and certain military service. This would be similar to leave under the federal Family Medical Leave Act (“FMLA”), but not identical. For example, unlike the FMLA, this bill would prohibit an employer from requiring employees to use sick time, vacation or paid time off when taking leave. Also, unlike the FMLA, employees would be able designate a person, not necessarily a family member, whose serious health condition would allow the employee to take leave. There is also an anti-retaliation provision.

In addition, the bill would established a division within the Department of Labor to create a fund, funded by a premium set by the division and paid by employees, for wage replacement for employees taking leave under the FMLA or this bill. The bill provides that employers may apply for “nominal and reasonable assistance” from the fund to help offset the employer’s costs of creating payroll deduction for the premiums. The bill does not explain how this would work.

A hearing on this bill has been set for February 6, at 1:30 PM, before the House Business Affairs and Labor Committee. Interested parties can attend and testify regarding the bill. They may also write to legislators to express their opinions regarding this bill. This and many other legislative issues will be discussed at CO-SHRM’s Day at the Capital event on February 26 and 27. See the CO-SHRM website for more information.