



NICOLE R. GALLOWAY, CPA
Missouri State Auditor

February 21, 2017

Governor Eric R. Greitens
State Capitol, Room 216
Jefferson City, Mo 65101

Governor Greitens,

I was disappointed to learn that your administration has not filed orders of rulemaking to ensure state workers can take paid time off to care for their children.¹ These proposed rules allow state executive branch employees to use their earned sick leave at any point during the first year following the birth or adoption of a child for the purpose of parental bonding.

Without these rule changes, employees could be prohibited from using paid sick leave during the critical bonding period in the weeks and months after a child is born or adopted. Families benefit when both parents are involved in the care of a newborn, and these rules give greater opportunities for spouses to be involved, particularly in cases where both parents work for the state. As a mother, and as someone who is caring for a newborn while balancing my duties as Auditor, this issue is personal to me.

I encourage all state office holders to examine their own personnel policies to ensure they offer employees options to utilize existing paid leave for parental bonding. In 2015, I conducted a review of the State Auditor's Office policies to ensure we offer paid leave to new parents, and I asked my staff to establish clear guidelines to eliminate any possible ambiguity in those policies. My office also recently amended our personnel policies to allow for paid leave in situations involving domestic violence. I am constantly looking for cost-neutral ways to improve work-life balance for the dedicated public servants that serve our state. I have urged, and will continue to urge, other state office holders to do the same.

As you have repeatedly acknowledged, Missouri's state employees are among the lowest paid in the nation. Attracting qualified state workers is increasingly challenging. Just as in some of the most successful private companies, we should promote policies that foster a healthy work-life balance throughout the state workforce, especially when it carries no additional cost and has been shown to improve worker productivity, retention and overall job satisfaction.

While I appreciate your commitment to reducing government burdens through a moratorium on new rules, these proposed changes do not create burdens on private business, and they are clearly beneficial to the health and welfare of Missourians. It is my sincere hope that you will allow these changes to proceed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nicole R. Galloway".

Nicole R. Galloway, CPA

¹ 1 CSR 20-05.015 and 1 CSR 20-5.020, approved unanimously by the Personnel Advisory Board on December 13, 2016.