



NICOLE R. GALLOWAY, CPA
Missouri State Auditor

January 6, 2020

Governor Michael L. Parson
Office of the Governor
State Capitol Building
201 W. Capitol Avenue, Room 216
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Dear Governor Parson:

On December 20, 2019, President Donald Trump signed into law a historic bipartisan initiative providing federal workers with 12 weeks of parental leave after the birth or adoption of a child. Leaders on the federal level and I agree that mothers and fathers should not have to choose between their jobs and having meaningful time with their new or expanding families.

As a parent of three, I know firsthand how important it is to promote policies that foster a healthy work-life balance. Not only have paid leave policies been shown to have positive impacts on child health, they also promote better productivity and improve worker retention. As state leaders, we should be looking for new and innovative ways to ensure we can hire and retain the best public servants to work for the people of Missouri.

When I became Auditor, I immediately updated my office's personnel policies to be more family friendly. My office was a leader in state government in expanding personnel policies to include responding to domestic violence as a protected leave category. We also strengthened our leave policies to allow for bonding time after the birth or adoption of a child. In 2017, I encouraged former Gov. Eric Greitens to follow my example. Not long after, he extended similar leave policies throughout the executive branch of state government by signing Executive Order 17-09.

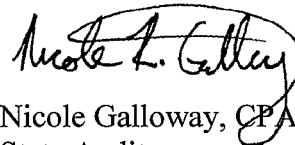
With this in mind, I am calling on you to ensure Missouri is keeping up with the standard set by President Trump on parental leave. As former Gov. Greitens did, you can sign an executive order to update personnel policies for state employees. You can act now to grant caregivers 12 weeks of parental leave following the birth or adoption of a child.

This is not only good public policy, it is something that Missouri businesses and Fortune 500 companies throughout the country are implementing. A recent survey found 40% of employers in the U.S. now offer parental leave, up from 24% three years prior. As one of the largest employers in the state, Missouri state government should also be leading the way.

While participating in the childcare roundtable with Ivanka Trump in Kansas City last fall and again recently in Washington D.C., you expressed an interest in ensuring resources are available to parents to strengthen Missouri's workforce. You can implement this policy now without legislation, establishing a taskforce, or other delay.

I am ready to stand with you to move our state forward to benefit Missouri families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nicole L. Galloway". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "N".

Nicole Galloway, CPA
State Auditor