

TAKE CARE NET

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## Leading Democratic Presidential Candidates Voice Support for Family Friendly Policies

### Republican Candidates Fail to Respond to Survey

They disagree about who should be the next President, but all the Democratic presidential front-runners do agree on expanding the Family and Medical Leave Act, ensuring a minimum number of paid sick days, increasing funding for child care and after-school programs, and raising the minimum wage, according to a survey released today by Take Care Net (TCN) and several other organizations that work to promote family-friendly policies.

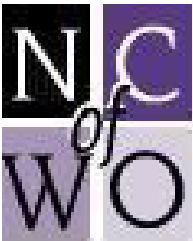
The survey addressed five major areas: education and child care; family and medical leave; family caregivers; paid caregivers; and general work/life balance. Candidates were asked whether they supported 26 public policies that would assist working families, from guaranteeing leave for appointments related to domestic violence to public funding for pre-school programs to limiting mandatory overtime for health and safety professionals.

Take Care Net and its partners sent the survey to the twelve leading Democratic and Republican Presidential candidates contacting each campaign a minimum of three times to obtain responses. Senators Hillary Clinton, Christopher Dodd, John Edwards, Barack Obama and Governor Bill Richardson responded to the survey. No Republican candidates responded.

“On some issues, the Republican and Democratic presidential candidates are similar, but not here,” said Robert Drago, Chair of the TCN Steering Committee. “I was very disappointed that none of the Republicans even responded. The overwhelmingly positive response from the Democratic candidates stands in stark contrast, and highlights their recognition of how important these issues are to America’s working families.”

The survey effort was co-sponsored by the Labor Project for Working Families, MomsRising.org, the Mothers’ Movement Online, the National Council of Women's Organizations, the New York State Paid Family Leave Coalition, Take Back Your Time, and 9to5, the National Association of Working Women.

“Increasingly, people are recognizing that if you want to hold public office, you need to address the issues that working families struggle with every day,” said MomsRising Executive Director Kristin Rowe-Finkbeiner. “We’re delighted to



see that the Democratic front-runners support a policy agenda that supports American families. We still hope to hear from the Republican front-runners with regard to how they stand on these most basic, bread-and-butter issues.”

Added Linda Meric, director of 9to5, National Association of Working Women, “9to5 is pleased to see so many positive responses to the TakeCareNet survey from these candidates. The American workplace hasn’t kept up with changes in the workforce, and it’s time for all political candidates to take the needs of working families seriously. If they truly believe in family values, candidates must demonstrate that they value families.”

Kim Otis, director of The National Council of Women's Organizations, 230 member organizations representing 11 million women nationwide, also expressed pleasure at seeing many of the Presidential candidates “responding to the crisis of care in American society today. We hope that this effort by Take Care Net will encourage not only lip service, but also actions and innovative public policies to support the millions of women struggling to care for their families.”

Candidates who responded to the survey expressed a strong commitment to expanding public policy supports for care work. Senator Dodd and Governor Richardson supported every single policy addressed in the survey. The other Democratic candidates supported almost all policies listed; in cases where they didn’t, most described support for similar policies aimed at achieving the same goals. In no case did the candidates who responded oppose any policy listed.

Rather than supporting conversion of the Child Tax Credit for a Caregiver Credit, for example, Clinton described a separate \$3,000 caregiver tax credit. Obama proposes to quadruple the number of infants and toddlers participating in Early Head Start. While Edwards did not register support for Head Start expansion, he promised to help all states provide universal preschool for four-year olds.

The questionnaires were sent electronically to the domestic policy advisors for each campaign and TCN followed up with each campaign to solicit responses. A copy of the survey and a table showing the candidates’ responses is available online at [www.takecarenet.org](http://www.takecarenet.org).

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*Take Care Net is a network of work and family experts who support public policies that take care of those who give and those who need care.*