



June 20, 2022

The Honorable Richard Neal
Chair
Committee on Ways & Means
U.S. House of Representatives
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin Brady
Ranking Member
Committee on Ways & Means
U.S. House of Representatives
1139 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Neal and Ranking Member Brady:

On behalf of our nearly 38 million members and all older Americans nationwide, AARP would like to thank you for holding this hearing on *The Burnout Epidemic and What Working Women Need for a Stronger Economy*. AARP believes that job-protected leave, such as paid family and caregiving leave, will enable all women, including those age 50 plus, to remain in the workforce for as long as they choose.

Many women age 50 and older struggle to balance their jobs with family caregiving responsibilities. In 2021, women made up about 47 percent of the workforce, of which 23 percent were women ages 55 and older. Many of these working women are taking care of children, older parents, spouses, or other loved ones while also juggling full-or-part-time jobs. When women are forced to exit the workforce early because of family caregiving responsibilities, it leaves them at a financial disadvantage with respect to Social Security, lifetime earnings and retirement savings. When they choose to re-enter the workforce, older working women often have great difficulty finding reemployment, which can lead to long-term unemployment. That is why paid family and caregiving leave is so critical to keep women in the workforce, especially when labor markets are tight.

AARP has heard from our members like 59-year-old Ann Lindberg-Borgen, who works at a high school in Minnesota and is also the primary caregiver of her 94-year-old mother, about how grateful she is that her job provides paid leave. As her mother's primary caregiver, she must take her mother to medical, dental, and eye care appointments as well as help her with daily care and household chores. Ann shared that paid leave benefits allowed her to keep her job and maintain financial security while also caring for her mom.

Paid leave for working caregivers is critical to older working women because no one should have to choose between keeping their job and caring for a loved one in need. We hope these comments will assist the committee on important policy work to improve the lives of working women and our economy. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me or have your staff contact Holly Biglow on our Government Affairs team at hbiglow@aarp.org or (202) 570-3760.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Bill Sweeney".

Bill Sweeney
Senior Vice President
Government Affairs