

My name is Sohnma Greenfield. I'm a single mother of three. I became a single mother after getting divorced in 2009. I was diagnosed with Rheumatoid Arthritis and Lupus in 2010. I didn't realize the seriousness of my illness until I was admitted into the hospital for a week. I couldn't take off any more time because I needed to work to take care of my family. I had to save my sick time for days I needed to take off if I experience a Lupus flareup. My work schedule and my kid's school activities were becoming overwhelming. I started Family Medical Leave Assistance but found out it was only to allow me to stay employed. On the days I couldn't work a full 8 hour day, I was still expected to complete 8 hours of work. This rigorous schedule started to take a toll on my health, where it was becoming difficult to keep up with the work and stay healthy. December 2015 I left my job, for medical reasons and applied for disability. I was denied twice, even after an appeal was filed. It took a little over two years for the decision to be made on my disability application. I had to request funds from my retirement to take care of my personal needs. I also lost my housing and had to rely on family and friends for me and my children to have a place to live.

Paid Family and Medical Leave are very important for so many working families, especially those who may need to care for themselves or family members due to medical reasons. It's difficult for anyone to decide between their health or the health of a family member, and their job. I need my job to survive but Paid Family and Medical Leave would also make it easier to survive during my time of illness.