

Good morning madam chair & ... my name is Renee herskovitz I am a small business owner who strongly supports universal paid family & medical leave. This past Monday I joined 60 other small business owners here at the Capitol along with Main Street Alliance to share our stories & speak with representatives about our need for this important legislation.

When I was 18 I found myself, despite preventative measures having to make a decision to place the child I was carrying for adoption. I gave birth to her on August 18 1999, I left that hospital without my daughter, a feeling I will never forget. It's a feeling of forgetting something every day for the rest of your life. I'm not sure many people know this but after the adoption is settled you stop receiving any help from the agency or anyone else. No one really wants to talk to you about it everyone just act as if it didn't happen, and you don't get time off as you "don't have a child to care for"

So 1 week after giving birth & leaving that hospital alone I went back to work. I had a broken tailbone from my delivery I couldn't stand on my own from a seated position, I also bled for weeks after. These were minor compared to how my mind & heart felt.

This is why I support paid family & medical leave. As a small business owner this bill would allow me to afford this type of benefit, as I would never take on employees if I couldn't afford to give them leave.

It's appalling to think we are even having to fight for something so important to every human's well being. It is frankly embarrassing to think we put each other through so much trauma, just because we don't want to pay a couple dollars a week to make sure people can FULLY heal physically and mentally before having to return to work.

I implore you to vote yes on paid family & medical leave, it is your human duty to do so.