Parental Bereavement Leave Expansion Act

Introduced by Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI)

Background: The federal government first began offering Parental Bereavement Leave following the passage of the *National Defense Authorization Act of 2022*. This benefit established that qualified federal employees will be given 2 work weeks of paid leave if they experience the death of a child younger than the age of 18, or if the child is older than 18 but incapable of caring for themselves because of a mental or physical disability.

Problem: Under current law, federal employees who experience the death of a child who is older than the age of 17 do not qualify for Parental Bereavement Leave. This means that if a child dies while still attending high school, living at home, or recently returned from college, parents do not qualify for Parental Bereavement Leave if the child is 18 or older.

The Parental Bereavement Leave Expansion Act:

This bill directs the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to provide Parental Bereavement Leave to qualifying federal employees who experience the death of a child who is younger than 26 years of age, or older than 26 but incapable of caring for themselves.

As with the current law, to be eligible for parental bereavement leave, the child must be a biological, adopted, foster child, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child of a person standing in place of the parent. To be a qualified employee, an individual must have completed at least 12 months of service as an employee of the Federal Government in addition to meeting several criteria required to qualify for Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave. This leave benefit must be used within 12 months of a child's death.

Endorsing Organizations: American Federation of Government Employees and National Partnership for Women & Families.