



November 9, 2017

The Honorable Mimi Walters
215 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Walters:

On behalf of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) and our 285,000 members, I am writing to commend your leadership and thank you for introducing H.R. 4219, the Workflex in the 21st Century Act.


SHRM and its members believe that the United States must have a 21st Century workflex policy that works for both employers and employees alike, helping them meet both work-life and organizational needs. A 21st Century workflex policy must facilitate the expansion of paid leave and workflex options regarding when, where and how work is done, while accounting for differences in work environments, employer size, and industries.

H.R. 4219 embodies these key principles by amending the Employee Retirement and Income Security Act (ERISA) to create a qualified flexible work arrangement plan as an employee welfare benefit. Employers who *voluntarily* choose to provide their employees a federal standard of paid time off and options for flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting or compressed work schedules, would preempt all state and local paid leave requirements.

Both full- and part-time employees of employers who opt into an ERISA workflex plan would receive guaranteed paid leave that exceeds nearly all state and local mandates, while employees of nonparticipating employers would continue to be covered by state and local paid leave requirements, where applicable. Employees of participating employers would also receive guaranteed access to flexible workplace options – giving many employees access to workplace flexibility for the first time. Employers who opt in would enjoy improved predictability by being able to follow the federal standard for paid leave alleviating the complexity of the various state and local laws.

SHRM looks forward to working with you and your colleagues to advance H.R. 4219, which when enacted into law, will expand paid leave and workplace flexibility options for all employees—reflecting today's most innovative workplace strategies. Again, SHRM applauds your leadership on this critical workplace issue.

Sincerely,



Henry G. "Hank" Jackson, CPA
President and CEO
Society for Human Resource Management

CC: Members of the U.S. House Education and the Workforce Committee