



Take Back Your Time

FIGHTING OVERWORK AND TIME POVERTY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEW POLL SHOWS STRONG AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR A PAID VACATION LAW: STUDY SHOWS WORKERS RUN RISK OF BURNOUT FROM TOO LITTLE VACATION! NEW VACTION WEB SITE LAUNCHED!

A new poll (http://www.timeday.org/right2vacation/poll_results.asp) finds that more than two-thirds of Americans support a law that would guarantee paid vacations for American workers. The scientific telephone sample of 1,002 Americans was conducted by The Opinion Research Corporation, a leading professional pollster, during the week of June 23, 2008. Seattle based **Take Back Your Time** has launched a new web site (www.right2vacation.org) to help Americans get what they want.

The poll found 69% of Americans saying they would support a paid vacation law, with the largest percentage of respondents favoring a law guaranteeing three weeks vacation or more. **Take Back Your Time** advocates a three-week paid vacation law. Americans under 35 (83%), African-Americans (89%), Hispanic-Americans (82%), and low-income Americans (82%) were the strongest supporters of such a law, as were residents of the Northeast (75%) and the South (72%). 75% of women and 63% of men support a paid vacation law. 74% of families with children support such a law. Every demographic showed majority support for a law. Overall, only 27% of those polled were opposed to a paid vacation law.

NOT ENOUGH TIME OFF TO AVOID BURNOUT

Americans were also asked how many weeks of vacation are best to prevent "burnout." 52% said they need three weeks or more and 82% said they needed at least two weeks.

Disturbingly though, the survey showed that among working Americans, 28% took no vacation time at all last year, half took a week or less, and two-thirds got less than two weeks off. The median time off for all workers was 8.2 days, far below the three weeks that most cited as the optimum to prevent burnout, much less actually relax and enjoy themselves.

A growing body of evidence suggests that burnout is just one of the negative consequences of too little vacation time. Studies have firmly established that men who don't take vacations are 32% more likely to die of heart attacks and women are 50% more likely. Lack of vacation time doubles rates of depression for women. After vacations, workers gain an hour per night of quality sleep and their reaction times are 30-40% faster, improvements that last for several months.

"American work-life is out of balance and this poll shows people know it," said Cecile Andrews, chair of the **Take Back Your Time** board. "The only difference between dinosaurs and American vacations is that dinosaurs are already extinct. We are losing the breaks we need to stay healthy, avoid stress and bond with our families. *It's certainly a shame that neither Presidential candidate has addressed this issue. Maybe this poll will get them to take notice.*"



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NEW RIGHT2VACATION WEB SITE LAUNCHED

Take Back Your Time has just launched a new Web site— www.right2vacation.org — promoting the idea of a paid vacation law.

Mixing hard science and a lighthearted touch to make a very serious case, the site includes the latest research on the impacts of too little vacation time, as well as more than three dozen humorous and powerful posters that can be downloaded, printed and posted to call attention to the campaign and ways to get involved.

“The site is fun, just like vacations are,” said Joe Robinson, author of *Work to Live*, and a leader of the campaign. “The United States is the only wealthy country without a paid vacation law. We’re the capital of burnout and it’s costing all of us hundreds of billions of dollars a year. We can change that with a law guaranteeing vacations to workers. We need time to enjoy the fruits of our labor. Fun is not a four-letter word. But this would actually make businesses more productive too.”

“Vacations are so important for family bonding,” said William Doherty, professor of Family Social Science at the University of Minnesota. “Some of the strongest memories from childhood involve family vacations. And yet, far fewer families are taking them now.”

NEW EPIDEMIC SPREADING THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES: IRRITABLE GROWL SYNDROME

“Take Back Your Time’s medical team has discovered a new disease that has rapidly been spreading throughout the US in recent years,” said Executive Director John de Graaf. “Ever notice that people seem crankier, there’s lots of road rage, we’re all impatient? Do you feel like screaming at your computer to hurry up sometimes? Nerves frazzled by overwork and constant rushing lead to angry snarls. We call it ‘Irritable Growl Syndrome.’ It’s definitely hard on Americans’ health and there’s no pill to cure it. Our workers need a real ‘pause that refreshes,’ and the most promising is more vacation time. Time to unwind from the ever-increasing stresses of the workplace.”

Take Back Your Time believes that the lack of vacation time in the United States is a serious problem, as the new poll indicates. A law guaranteeing paid vacations would allow us to catch up to other nations (for example, *every* European worker gets a minimum of four weeks paid vacation). It would lead to higher hourly productivity and reduce the escalating cost of health care, by making all Americans healthier. It’s not rocket science; it’s common sense. Every other wealthy country in the world realizes that.

Take Back Your Time can provide key experts for your radio programs or print stories. Just contact John de Graaf at: jodg@comcast.net or (206) 443-6747 or Joe Robinson: joe@worktolive.info.