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Paid Family Leave Can Support Foster Parents and All Types of Maine Families

Katrina Hoop,

I'm writing to express my support for a paid family and medical leave system in Maine. My story is one that is often overlooked in these conversations: the story of a foster parent.

Two weeks after I took in a newborn baby as a newly licensed foster parent, I received my first check from the state – the Department of Health and Human Services – as compensation. Although I knew being a resource parent was “paid caregiving,” it was a strange experience to think about what the money represented for me. I am not sure how the state calculates a “per diem rate,” but it begs the question: how do you calculate and remunerate the love you give another human, especially in the form of fostering?