July 11, 2019

TO: Interested Parties
FR: Strategies 360 Research
RE: Paid Family Leave Legislation in Colorado

A new Strategies 360 survey conducted on behalf of the State Innovation Exchange (SiX) reveals robust voter appetite for a statewide paid family leave plan.¹ Key findings include:

Creating a state-run family medical leave program—paid for jointly by employees and employers—earns widespread support from nearly two thirds of the electorate. Majorities of nearly every demographic subgroup favor this proposal, including broad majorities of liberals (84% support) and moderates (65%), as well as a plurality of conservatives (47%). Voters young and old back the proposal (71% support among voters under 50; 56% among voters 50 and older), and support surpasses 60% in every region of the state, including Denver metro and the West Slope.

Voters are more likely to support the program when they hear that workers can take up to 12 weeks of paid leave “for qualified medical issues, such as a serious illness or caring for a sick family member” (58% more likely to support the program, 12% less likely).

Equally important, Coloradans are not deterred by the costs of the program. When told that “the insurance premium to fund the program would average $83 per year for a worker who makes minimum wage, and $180 per year for a worker who makes $50,000 per year,” voters are 21% more likely to favor the program than they are less likely after hearing the cost to employees.

The specific provisions of the program further bolster support. Coloradans believe maternity and paternity coverage are essential (64% more likely to support, 15% less likely), but they also want

¹ Strategies 360 conducted an online survey of 600 registered voters in Colorado. Respondents were randomly selected from a statewide panel of residents and screened on their voter registration status. Interviews were conducted June 21-25, 2019.
the program to cover caring “for yourself or a family member who is facing serious illness or sudden injury, including caring for parents and end-of-life care” (65% more, 15% less). Additionally, voters favor the program’s inclusion of “needs arising from military deployments such as taking leave to get help with post-traumatic stress disorder” (64% more, 13% less), as well as “taking leave to receive care for the physical and mental impacts arising from violence, stalking, or sexual assault” (57% more, 18% less).