

TRANSCRIPT

marketplace  of ideas



featuring New Jersey Governor

## **JON S. CORZINE**

On Guaranteeing Paid Family Leave

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**DRUM  
MAJOR**  
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POLICY

**THE DRUM MAJOR INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY  
MARKETPLACE OF IDEAS SERIES**

**GUARANTEERING PAID FAMILY LEAVE**

**SPEAKERS:**

**M. PATRICIA SMITH**

Commissioner, New York State Department of Labor

**ANA L. OLIVEIRA**

President & CEO, The New York Women's Foundation

**DAN CANTOR**

Executive Director, Working Families Party

Introduction by **DONNA DOLAN**

Chair, New York State Paid Family Leave Coalition

Moderated by: **ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER**

Executive Director, Drum Major Institute for Public Policy

**ABOUT DMI'S "MARKETPLACE OF IDEAS" SERIES:**

Never content just to argue theory, the Drum Major Institute provides a platform for policymakers who have successfully worked for social and economic fairness in our public institutions. For far too long the conservative right has defined the limits of what is "possible" in society and politics. The "Marketplace of Ideas" shows that we can transcend these artificial boundaries: it is possible to be progressive, practical, and effective. Previous speakers in the series have included Boston Mayor Thomas Menino, who catalyzed the rehabilitation of abandoned buildings into affordable housing; Minnesota Attorney General Lori Swanson, who initiated tough standards to crack down on predatory mortgage lending; Dallas District Attorney Craig Watkins, who transformed the prosecutor's role to include a focus on exonerating the innocent; and State Senator Sharon Treat who passed legislation increasing access to affordable prescription drugs.

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# PANELISTS AND SPEAKERS

**GOVERNOR JON CORZINE** was born on January 1, 1947, and grew up on a small family farm in the central Illinois community of Willey's Station. Governor Corzine graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1969 and enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserves. He remained in the reserves until 1975, rising to the rank of sergeant in his infantry unit. He received his MBA from the University of Chicago in 1973 and went to work at Bank Ohio, a regional bank in Columbus, Ohio. In 1975, Governor Corzine was recruited by Goldman Sachs, the New York investment firm, and he and his family moved to New Jersey. He was named a partner at Goldman Sachs in 1980 and became chairman and chief executive officer in 1994. He left Goldman Sachs in May 1999 after successfully converting the investment firm from a private partnership to a public company. The governor was named by Time magazine as one of the top 50 technology executives in the country in 1997. Jon Corzine was elected to the United States Senate in November 2000. During his time in the Senate, he focused on serving the state of New Jersey, applying his financial expertise to major economic and regulatory issues, and pushing a forward-looking, progressive agenda. As Senator he sought new federal investments in New Jersey's transportation network, pursued new safeguards to protect chemical facilities against terrorist attack, introduced legislation to improve access to education and healthcare, fought for stronger environmental policies, and led the effort in Congress to crack down on corporate abuse. In 2005, Jon Corzine announced his candidacy for the governorship of New Jersey and was sworn in as New Jersey's 54th Governor on January 17, 2006.

**COMMISSIONER M. PATRICIA SMITH** has been a dynamic and effective labor advocate for over 30 years. She has been a driving force in overhauling the New York State Labor Department to focus on vigorously protecting workers and on ensuring that employers compete on a level playing field. During her first year of leadership of the Labor Department, she assembled a task force that in just four months found over 2,000 misclassified workers with over \$19 million dollars in unreported wages. Commissioner Smith has strived to highlight the key role the Labor Department plays in economic development by improving training opportunities for workers. Before coming to the Labor Department, Commissioner Smith served for eight years as Chief of the Labor Bureau in the Office of the New York State Attorney General. In that position, she developed a system of active government labor law enforcement that has served as a model for other Attorneys General and enforcement agencies. Under her leadership, the Labor Bureau built a proactive labor docket, enforcing labor laws by innovative approaches, such as developing a Code of Conduct; partnering with advocacy groups; targeting enforcement efforts on an industry-wide basis; and focusing on low-wage and immigrant workers. For 11 years, Commissioner Smith served as Deputy Bureau Chief and Section Chief of the Labor Bureau, conducting and overseeing labor law litigation in state and federal courts. In 1996 and 1997 as Deputy Bureau Chief, she argued and won

two Employment Retirement Income Security Act cases before the United States Supreme Court. Prior to joining the Office of the Attorney General, Commissioner Smith worked for various Legal Services Organizations representing unemployment claimants, minimum wage workers, workers in federal job training programs, and job seekers. She is a graduate of Trinity College in Washington, D.C. and New York University School of Law.

**ANA L. OLIVEIRA** became the President & CEO of the New York Women's Foundation in February of 2006. She has worked in the health and human services field for over 20 years, developing programs for vulnerable populations throughout New York City. She served as the first woman and Latina Executive Director of Gay Men's Health Crisis for over seven years, overseeing a complete turnaround of the agency. Before working at GMHC, Oliveira directed innovative community-based programs at Samaritan Village, the Osborne Association, and Kings County and Lincoln Hospitals. Oliveira was a member of the New York City HIV Planning Council and was appointed by Mayor Bloomberg to the New York City Commission on AIDS in 2004. Her awards include the Mutual Welfare League Certificate (Osborne Association); the Liberty Award, (Lambda Legal & Education Defense Fund); the Community Service Award (Empire State Pride Agenda); and the Rosie Perez Fuerza Award, (Latino Commission on AIDS). She was profiled in Newsweek in 2005 in "America's Best," a series highlighting ordinary individuals using their extraordinary vision on behalf of others. Oliveira was born and raised in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and resides in Manhattan. She has an M.A. in Medical Anthropology from the New School for Social Research and is a Licensed Acupuncturist.

**DAN CANTOR** is the founding Executive Director of the Working Families Party, one of the 3 minor parties with official ballot status in New York State. The WFP is a community labor party dedicated to advancing the interests and values of the middle class, the working class, and the poor. Mr. Cantor has been a community, labor, and political organizer for 25 years. He was labor coordinator for Rev. Jesse Jackson's 1988 presidential campaign and has worked across the country to build multiracial, class-oriented coalitions. He has written numerous articles on American politics and is co-author with Juliet Schor of "Tunnel Vision."

**DONNA DOLAN** is an International Union Representative for the Communications Workers of America. She has been the CWA District One's Director of Work/Family Issues for the past 16 years and represented the Union in the joint labor/management partnership on Work/Family that CWA negotiated with Verizon in the late 1980s. She was jointly responsible for the development and implementation of all work/family programs through the CWA/Verizon Dependent Care Fund. Additionally, Ms. Dolan chairs the NYS Paid Family Leave Coalition and is a steering committee member of the Multi-State Consortium on Paid Leave. She also chairs the NYS AFL-CIO Task Force on Paid Family Leave. Ms. Dolan is a founding board member of the Alliance for Work/Life Progress and of the New York City Child Care Coalition. She has spoken at numerous work/family corporate and academic conferences on

labor's involvement in work/family issues and has been a panelist on PBS and Cable TV shows. Ms. Dolan is a graduate of Boston College and holds a Master's Degree from Bowling Green State University.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER** has led the effort since 2002 to turn the Drum Major Institute, originally founded by an advisor to Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. during the civil rights movement, into a progressive policy institute with national impact. Under Andrea's leadership as Executive Director, DMI has released many important policy papers to national audiences including: 'Congress at the Midterm: Their Middle-Class Record' and 'Principles for an Immigration Policy to Strengthen and Expand the American Middle Class.' Andrea studied public policy at the University of Chicago. She has worked in various capacities to promote educational equity and youth empowerment. She directed a national campaign to engage college students in the discussion on the future of Social Security for the Pew Charitable Trusts, and served as Director of Public Relations of Teach For America before working as the education advisor to Bronx Borough President Fernando Ferrer. Andrea has been profiled in *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *Latina Magazine* and in 'Hear us Now,' an award winning documentary about her tenure as the student member of the New York City Board of Education. She has appeared on the 'Lou Dobbs Tonight' show on CNN and has been published in *New York Newsday*, *Crain's New York Business*, *The Mississippi Sun Herald*, *New York Daily News*, *Alternet.com*, *Tom Paine.com*, *New York Sun*, *Colorlines Magazine*, *The Chief-Leader* and *City Limits* magazine. She is a contributor to The Huffington Post and on the Editorial Board of *The Nation*. She was named a '40 under 40 Rising Star' by *Crain's New York Business* and a 'Next Generation of Political Leaders in New York' by *City Hall Newspaper*. She received a LatinaPAC Dolores Huerta Award for 'making great strides in promoting progress in our community. Andrea is the author of *The Death of "Why?": The Decline of Questioning and the Future of Democracy* published by Berrett-Koehler Publishers in June 2009.

## TRANSCRIPT

*The transcript from this event has been edited for length and readability. Internet links are provided in footnotes throughout this transcript as resources for readers seeking to better understand the policy discussion. While we hope they are helpful, the Drum Major Institute for Public Policy is not responsible for the content or continued functioning of these links.*

**DONNA DOLAN:** Good morning. My name is Donna Dolan and I chair the New York State Paid Family Leave Coalition. I am delighted to be here today to kick off the discussion of one of my passions: guaranteeing paid family leave to the workforce here in New York State. From New York State we seek to expand paid family leave across this nation.

I would like to begin by thanking the Drum Major Institute for hosting this Marketplace of Ideas on the critical issue of paid family leave. Never content just to argue theory, the Drum Major Institute—DMI—provides a platform for policymakers who have successfully worked for social and economic fairness in our public institutions. For far too long, the conservative right has defined the limits of what is possible in society and politics. The Marketplace of Ideas shows that we can transcend these artificial boundaries. It is possible to be progressive, practical, and effective.

Since DMI's inception, we have heard from a wide range of speakers, including Boston Mayor Thomas Menino, who catalyzed the rehabilitation of abandoned buildings into affordable housing; Minnesota Attorney General Lori Swanson, who initiated tough standards to crack down on predatory mortgage lending; Dallas District Attorney Craig Watkins, who transformed the prosecutor's role to include a focus on exonerating the innocent; and Maine State Representative Sharon Treat, who passed legislation increasing access to affordable prescription drugs.

As for our topic this morning: today's households increasingly depend on two incomes, requiring an increase in the time spent working by parents without a decrease in familial responsibilities. Two-thirds of America's families with children, including both married couples and single

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—Donna Dolan

parents, have all adults in the workforce. At the same time, one in five American adults reports having care giving responsibilities for another adult, such as a disabled or elderly relative. Most of these caregivers are employed. Any person can be struck, as the Governor knows so well, by a serious illness that prevents them from working for weeks at a time. Families need flexibility in their work lives to care for their own illness or family members in need.

We know that the Family and Medical Leave Act<sup>1</sup>, passed in 1993, is intended to provide some security to families facing a sudden illness or welcoming a newborn. The law guarantees 12 weeks of unpaid leave to Americans working at businesses with 50 or more employees. Employers cannot replace workers on FMLA leave, or retaliate against them in any way.

The problem, though, is that millions of Americans cannot afford to take leave without pay. They are still forced to make an awful choice between family health needs and job security. The U.S. policy of offering only unpaid leave stands in stark contrast to the rest of the world. One-hundred-sixty-nine countries guarantee some form of paid leave to new parents. The U.S. is in the company of Liberia, Papua New Guinea, and Swaziland on that short list of nations that leave workers alone to cope with this life-changing event and do not mandate that employers provide paid time off when a child is born.<sup>2</sup>

Studies suggest that paid leave provides health and psychological benefits for working people and their families, while reducing employee turnover and improving productivity for businesses. The policy is also widely popular. The Drum Major Institute's recent survey of middle-class adults<sup>3</sup> finds that 71 % support a requirement that employers provide paid family and medical leave.

Here in New York State, the State Assembly passed legislation establishing paid family leave administered through the state's Disability Benefits Program<sup>4</sup> in both 2005 and in 2007,<sup>5</sup> but the bill was never taken up by the state Senate. This past legislative session which just ended at the end of June, a bill was introduced in the Senate but it never came to a vote. So, currently it appears that here in New York, we are going backwards. But I am going to leave it to my colleagues on the panel to discuss the challenges that we have here in New York.

Governor Corzine, we are anxious to hear from you, and to learn from New Jersey's experience. Governor Jon Corzine credits his recent recovery from a serious car accident with helping him personally recognize the importance of paid family and medical leave. As he signed New Jersey's Family Leave Insurance<sup>6</sup> bill into law this past May, the Governor noted that strong support from family members sustained him during his recuperation. I quote: "I was fortunate my family members had the flexibility to be there for me, day-in and day-out. But not everyone has that luxury."

Governor Corzine is not a newcomer to supporting paid family leave. He was the keynote speaker at a national conference that I attended when he was in the U.S. Senate. Governor, my colleagues in New Jersey from the Time to Care Coalition<sup>7</sup>,

who we worked with on the multistate Working Families Consortium<sup>8</sup>, asked me to share with all of you here how proud they are that they have a governor who is progressive and who has a real commitment to family values and to help workers be both productive workers and responsible family members. I give you Governor Jon Corzine.

**GOVERNOR JON CORZINE:** Good morning everyone. It is great to be with you. Donna just gave my speech, so I think I will be informal as I talk to you, but let me talk about a couple of points she mentioned that I want to emphasize. First of all, I think the question was: how do you get it done? Well, you get it done with people who have passion about these issues. I hope you believe that the Governor of the State of New Jersey is someone who believes it. The anecdote that Donna told about my own life experience about 18 months ago, when I was virtually in a coma for 11 days, and my family was with me that whole time, gives me a clear understanding of how it is actually important to have your family with you in a time of need. There are many, many stressful situations that individuals have to face. When their family is with them, the world is a lot better place and recovery is a lot more fulfilling.

It is a personal experience that actually gave me a little more drive. But I have to say that Julie Kashen, who was my Chief of Staff in my policy area, and David Socolow, the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development, and all of the interest groups, not unlike the Institute, were absolutely essential. This is one of those things where passion actually made a difference. There was enormous grass roots support for standing up for what is a true family value, which is making sure that a family has the capacity to be with their loved ones in a period of stress.

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—Governor Jon Corzine

If we did not have that foundation of passion underneath this, this would not have happened. We had a lot of good help from people like the AFL-CIO and the advocacy groups. We have Citizen Action in New Jersey<sup>9</sup> and New Jersey Public Policy Perspective<sup>10</sup>, the Time to Care Coalition, which is a whole group of people that have come together. But it was essential to have that passion underlying it, and stories that can be told. Because having stories was pretty forceful when I visited Chambers of Commerce, when they would say how this was going to destroy the business environment in New Jersey. To this day, I fully expect that when I run for reelection next year, when I go around to all of the interviewing sessions, the review sessions on what I have done or have not done, accomplished and have not accomplished, it will be those groups that stood with me when passing this

1 See <http://www.dol.gov/esa/whd/fmla/>.

2 See <http://www.mcgill.ca/files/lhsp/WFEI2007.pdf>.

3 Available at <http://www.drummajorinstitute.org/library/report.php?ID=73>.

4 [http://www.wcb.state.ny.us/content/main/offthejob/IntroToLaw\\_DB.jsp](http://www.wcb.state.ny.us/content/main/offthejob/IntroToLaw_DB.jsp)

5 See the Working Families Time to Care Act.

6 For background, see <http://lwd.state.nj.us/labor/fli/fliindex.html>.

7 <http://www.njtimetocare.rutgers.edu/>

8 See [http://valuefamiliesatwork.org/documents/ValuingFamilies\\_Agenda09.pdf](http://valuefamiliesatwork.org/documents/ValuingFamilies_Agenda09.pdf).

9 <http://www.njcitizenaction.org/>

10 <http://www.njpp.org/index.html>

**We had to compromise a lot in the process to get this piece of legislation done. Twelve weeks is the unpaid leave granted by the federal government and by New Jersey. We had to cut this to six weeks. We had to cap the income thresholds at \$41,000– \$41,000 is barely break even in New Jersey, it is barely above the poverty line for a family of four.**

—Governor Jon Corzine

legislation that will be there. But, there will be a very, very strong pushback from the business community on this as well.

I happen to think that is BS. I am an old, washed-up businessman myself and I think that you do a lot better when you actually create an environment where people in your workplace feel secure about what their lives will be going forward.

Now, this is a very important step forward in the movement for paid family leave across the country. It is not the be-all and end-all, but it is a very, very strong step. We had to compromise a lot in the process to get this piece of legislation done. Twelve weeks is the unpaid leave granted by the federal government and by New Jersey. We had to cut this to six weeks. We had to cap the income thresholds at \$41,000– \$41,000 is barely break even in New Jersey, it is barely above the poverty line for a family of four. Another limitation is that we only give two-thirds of pay.<sup>11</sup> It is not everything that we would like to see it be, but it is an important, important first step. I think that over a period of time it is the foundation on which we can grow this into the program that we would have preferred.

I think that in all of these situations you have to work to get through the compromises that are necessary. If I am not mistaken, Julie, this was debated in the New Jersey state legislature for over 12 years. So, this was not an easy lift. It is a little bit like repealing the death penalty; it was not an easy lift. You have to go at this over and over and over again, and you need to have someone who is willing to stand up to business. I think that, particularly, was my role.

I have to say that this is something that I think needs to be on the agenda of the next President. We need to take family leave and turn it into paid family leave. And, having been a speaker in political forums on occasion, I thought I heard Barack Obama say that in his acceptance speech. It is a little fuzzy in there; I have been known to be fuzzy myself, so I do not want to be too rough. But I do think that if we have the incentives and the discussion at the national level, then we will create a format for our states to be able to do this. Because this is coterminous with our temporary disability insurance and, frankly, this is not a heavy lift on a financial basis. What is it, 66 cents a week a worker pays for insurance? And, in fact, I think paid family insurance is a better way to actually frame this than paid family leave.

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I think from a political standpoint, you have a better ability to push for the concept. \$33 a year is the total cost of this and it is an amazingly positive and effective way to go forward.

We are going to stick with this proposal. I do worry that we may have somewhat underestimated what the usage has been, although California, which had the first law, only had about 1% of its workforce use paid family leave. If we end up with similar statistics, we will be able to cover the cost. But it will take monitoring. I do not think if we go from 66 cents a week to 77 cents a week, it will be the end of the world. I do believe that we have a program that is both financeable and will end up giving families a real choice.

This is one of those things that we are very proud of in our state. It is absolutely essential in a world where we have bailouts of Wall Street firms and where we put billions and billions of dollars into protecting financial firms and businesses across this country. I think we can put 66 cents a week into protecting our families as we go forward. I am very proud of this. This is a landmark.

**I am very proud of this. This is a landmark... [B]ut I want to say, at the end of the day, without the passion that came from the advocates that transferred to folks in the legislature and without a commitment on your Governor's part, this is a very hard lift. You need that constant, constant push...**

—Governor Jon Corzine

I would be happy to take any of your questions about doing it, but I want to say, at the end of the day, without the passion that came from the advocates that transferred to folks in the legislature and without a commitment on your Governor's part, this is a very hard lift. You need that constant, constant push and, quite frankly, I do not want to be too partisan, but if you do not have control of the State Senate in New York, it is going to be a very hard lift, because without having the ability to twist the arms of my colleagues, this bill would not have passed. It was a hard enough lift with Democrats in control of both houses of the legislature; it would be virtually impossible given the business lobby, otherwise. So, I guess I am telling you: go out and vote Democratic this fall. God bless you.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHESLINGER:** We have a terrific panel here, and I am going to introduce them in turn. But since we are lucky enough to have Governor Corzine on the panel for a bit longer, I wanted to ask him a little bit more about this issue of business. You talked about business as the key opposition in this. Were you able to successfully refute the arguments, in particular of small business, that this would be a net loss for them? Were there any arguments that were convincing or was it just a question of organizing around them?

Do you wish that you had left after the first question?

**GOVERNOR JON CORZINE:** I do not think we won over many advocates in the business community. Large business was relatively comfortable with paid family leave. The small business community adamantly resists, however. We made some

<sup>11</sup> Workers making more than \$41,000 a year would receive less than two thirds of their weekly wages.

compromises with small business—not serious ones—with regard to ability to replace workers, not fire workers, but replace a worker in a specific job, which slightly accommodated the small business community. But there was plenty of fire and fury among the community and I do not think it was won over at the end of the day. This ended up getting 21 and 41, the appropriate number of votes in the legislature, in the Assembly and the Senate. There were virtually no arguments that worked with them. They thought it was going to interfere with business. I think that we will have an experience, I would say, a year or two years from now, that I think will be useful for other states. Because, quite frankly, we do not see, with just 1% of the workforce actually tapping into this, the kind of burden that people are talking about. In fact, a lot of people are taking the unpaid leave to start with in the

crisis situation and then dealing with the financial hardships that that brings. But until we can show folks the reality, I do not think you are going to convince the small business community and I think you have to work around them.

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—Governor Jon Corzine

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** I think this would be a good time to reiterate that the Drum Major Institute is a non-partisan, 501(c)3 organization. I just wanted to say that once, put that out there.

Since we are talking politics and policy, let me turn this to Dan Cantor. I will introduce each of our panelists in turn. Dan is the founding Executive Director of the Working Families Party<sup>12</sup>, one of the three minor parties with official ballot status in the state. But if you read the press last week, it is *the* party with official ballot status in the state. The WFP is a community labor party dedicated to advancing the interests and values of the middle class, working class, and poor.

Can you sketch for us the dynamic in New York State right now? I know that the last sentence will be something about the State Senate. But in the first couple of sentences before that, what is the dynamic? What is on the table legislatively? Who is in favor? Who is against? And what do we have to do with the State Senate?

**DAN CANTOR:** Well it is very straightforward, although in a background way, you might think of this as a great issue that demonstrates the two contending narratives in Albany and, I assume, in Trenton as well. There are those who think the role of the state is to get out of the way and deregulate and allow business to thrive and, thus, everything will work out okay. And there are others who think the role of the state is to mitigate some of the inequalities that come with the market system.

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—Dan Cantor

The market will never produce paid family leave on its own and that is why we are trying to figure it out. God gave us brains for a reason. The Governor of New Jersey clearly used his. So what has happened in New York is that we never actually engage on the heart of this thing. It is all just tactical posturing by both sides. We are close.

I have to do this. Donna Dolan and Debbie King<sup>13</sup> and Martha<sup>14</sup> have been carrying this for years. I am a Johnny-come-lately to this thing. I don't know how long it has been in New York, but it has been a while.

**PATRICIA SMITH:** Ten years.

**DAN CANTOR:** Ten years, okay. So, we are going to beat New Jersey. That is our slogan. We are going to get it in year 11. But New Jersey has done a heroic job of developing both the intellectual infrastructure for this and the grassroots work underneath it that makes it possible. So, the short answer is that the Assembly seems solid. There are a lot of details here. We also have to make some compromises and go with employee-paid leave. That is a bitter pill for some to swallow. On the other hand, we'll have paid family insurance— that is a great line that we might want to adopt here because it is a way for us to talk in a definite manner, provided the political realities go the way some of us hope they will.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** Let me now introduce Commissioner Patricia Smith, who has been a dynamic and effective labor advocate for over 30 years, a driving force in overhauling the New York State Labor Department to focus on vigorously protecting workers and ensuring that employers compete on a level playing field. Before coming to Labor, Commissioner Smith served as chief of the Labor Bureau in the office of the New York State Attorney General for eight years.

Commissioner Smith, there is some debate about whose responsibility family leave is: is it state or federal? You have some rumblings on the State Senate side saying, “Let’s wait and see if the federal government takes this up.” This gets to some of the fuzziness that the Governor was talking about. Senator Obama, for example, has talked a lot about paid family leave, but wants to set up a fund so that other states can do it. So, he is saying it is a state-level thing. What is the appropriate level of intervention when it comes to paid family leave/paid family insurance?

**PATRICIA SMITH:** I think that ultimately one would like to see this done on the federal level because then we would not have to go state by state by state. On the other hand, because we do have a history of just a very few states in this country having temporary disability, we might start this with those states, which is basically

<sup>13</sup> Deborah King is Executive Director of the 1199 Employment, Training and Job Security Program in New York City. The Program is a joint labor-management initiative to provide a wide range of training, education benefits, and job placement services to health care workers. For more information, see <http://www.nyc.gov/html/sbs/wib/html/about/king.shtml>.

<sup>14</sup> Martha Baker is an independent consultant providing program design, advocacy, and training to improve educational and employment opportunities for women and girls. For more information, see <http://www.barnard.edu/crow/betterbalance/participants.htm>.

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.workingfamiliesparty.org/>

On the other hand, because we do have a history of just a very few states in this country that have temporary disability, we might start this with those states, which is basically what has happened in New Jersey, California, and New York. We can be role models so that the federal government can see that it is possible.

—Commissioner Patricia Smith

what has happened in New Jersey, California, and New York. We can be role models so that the federal government can see that it is possible. Because we have the infrastructure in these states, I think it is easier to begin on the state level where we already have the infrastructure, where we have disability insurance, and now we can have family leave insurance.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESIGNER:** Could you explain a little bit...in preparing for this, I was awash in acronyms, none of which are very rhythmic—TDI, FMLA, they do not roll off the tongue. But could you explain TDI and how it relates to paid family leave for those of us who are not immersed in the terminology?

**PATRICIA SMITH:** New York has a required insurance program, temporary disability insurance. All employers in the state are required to have it. There is no carve-out. If you have at least one employee, you have to provide temporary disability insurance for those employees. Those employees are allowed to take up to 26 weeks if they are disabled. The benefit, unfortunately, in New York has not been increased in about over 10 years and it is a pitiful \$170 a week.

What family insurance would do is simply to increase the types of leave that you are allowed to take. Now you are allowed to take off when you are sick. If family insurance were passed, you would be able to take off if your child was sick, if you were having a new baby, if your parents were sick, whatever. So, it just basically increases the types of leave that you can take under the system that we already have.

**DAN CANTOR:** I want to ask the Governor a question. Why such opposition when it is employee-paid? It is not a tax.

**GOVERNOR JON CORZINE:** The argument of small business is that if someone has some incentive—and I am not saying I buy this argument—but the argument is, if they have an incentive, a financial incentive, to step out of the workplace, that will be extraordinarily disruptive to a small business of a five-person or a ten-person organization because they cannot replace them as easily as someone who works in a 500-person business place. I have heard that argument over and over again. It is generally added with the case that: “We look after our employees very well in small business. We are close to the people to start with.” So they give back the emotional argument that “We are already doing what you want us to do, but we do it within the context of what we have to accomplish.”

Quite frankly, I think this is an issue that is organizationally driven by the small business groups and advocates for small business more than it is by the local business unit itself. But it is a very powerful force, particularly in business organizations,

the chambers, the BIAs<sup>15</sup>. It is the same with other issues that gather around the emotional issue that “We manage the affairs of our small business perfectly well and you are interfering with us.”

The only thing that I would say in response to the previous question is that this needs to be a national program, as I believe temporary disability should be a national program. In New Jersey, we have a much more fulsome program. We can be proud that it is on an escalator, a CPI escalator<sup>16</sup>, so we have actually stayed current with it. But I think both of those programs are absolutely essential in today’s workplace. As I think most people in this room know, most people are one paycheck away from some kind of financial catastrophe in their own lives and without these kinds of underlying insurance elements, I think you have a very, very insecure society. So I would be an advocate for seeing this driven...It is going to be driven by states because states are the innovators, but it ought to be taken up at a national level.

[Family leave] needs to be a national program, as I believe temporary disability should be a national program...[M]ost people are one paycheck away from some kind of financial catastrophe in their own lives and without these kinds of underlying insurance elements, I think you have a very, very insecure society.

—Governor Jon Corzine

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** Let me introduce Ana Oliveira for a question that I want to turn both to Ana and to Governor Jon Corzine, if he has a moment. Ana became the President and CEO of the New York Women’s Foundation<sup>17</sup> in February 2006. She has worked in the health and human services field for over 20 years, developing programs for vulnerable populations throughout New York City. She served as the first woman and Latina Executive Director of Gay Men’s Health Crisis<sup>18</sup> for over seven years, overseeing a complete turnaround of the agency.

The question is: which way are women going to vote? If that is so important, why is paid family leave not more than a fuzzy mention? Why isn’t this a driving issue right now?

—Andrea Batista Schlesinger

So, I am reading in today’s *New York Times*, candidates fight out— I do not remember what the exact title was, but it was something to the effect of, the presidential campaign is all about fighting for women, women’s votes. Palin’s going

here, Obama’s running ads on choice, talking about pay equity. The question is: which way are women going to vote? If that is so important, why is paid family leave not more than a fuzzy mention? Why isn’t this a driving issue right now? And, just for the sake of clarification, McCain has said, again, that he was very proud to support—and he says it on his site—the Family and Medical Leave Act. Senator Obama has a plan for driving it to the states, but providing funds to do so. But why isn’t this an issue if it is all about women in this election?

15 A Business and Industry Association (BIA) is an employer association that promotes business-friendly public policy. See, for example, <http://www.njbia.org/>.

16 A “CPI escalator” indexes benefits to inflation.

17 <http://www.nwvf.org/>

18 <http://www.gmhc.org/index.html>

**ANA OLIVEIRA:** Good morning. I will try to bring to this discussion the passion part that Governor Jon Corzine is talking about. First of all, men and women should exercise fully their political power and it is time for us to do so. Although understanding how our specific gender roles put different burdens on different people, we should really take on our political agenda in a way that emancipates those roles.

**It is kind of weird for this country to make such a big deal out of family leave. It is so inappropriate for New York City, or New York State, to make such a big deal out of it. Economically speaking, it is an incredible return on investment. Socially speaking, it is an incredible, stabilizing, and maturing step.**

—Ana Oliveira

So, for instance, in the case of paid family leave, characteristically caretaking work is not necessarily valued in our society from a marketplace point of view and we are living the consequences of that. So I think that there's a disjointedness present here. Andrea talked about how, counting the votes of women, or relying on that segment of the population as a voting

group of people, does not correlate to an opportunity to transform the value and the understanding of, let's say, the role of women and the functions that are typically segregated and left to women. That is mostly social reproduction, mostly caretaking in society.

But I want to say that this phenomenon also has to do with the segmentation of the labor market. Even among working women and among families in poverty, women carry a disproportionate burden. The fact that there is an ongoing conflict, both individually and socially, experienced between caretaking for others in the family, in the household, and holding a job, being the provider for families, is really a pivotal issue.

I believe that we should take—by we I mean women and men—should take the opportunity of women's votes—but also the segregation of our gender responsibilities—in this election to raise the bar of the conversation. We should trust and enforce particular policy opportunities. I think paid family insurance leave is really an incredibly important opportunity that we should put into concrete detail to make it very powerful for multiple groups.

It is kind of weird for this country to make such a big deal out of family leave. It is so inappropriate for New York City, or New York State, to make such a big deal out of it. Economically speaking, it is an incredible return on investment. Socially speaking, it is an incredible, stabilizing, and maturing step.

I think we should approach the various acts that we need to pass federally and the improvements that need to be made in local jurisdictions according to the cost of living in different parts of the country. We need to do this because so much has been done too late and so much has been lost.

I do not have in front of me the cost of not having paid family leave. But the costs, not only to the employer, but also the costs that happen when we end up spending our energies, our hopes, and our resources, make paid family leave a smart thing.

The New York Women's Foundation is very happy to be here. But it is really the voice of our grantee partners that is important. I want to create a better balanced coalition. All the work that Donna and others have been doing is really what creates that political will to make this happen.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** Governor Corzine, do you want to tackle the dominance of this as a political issue on the national scene?

**GOVERNOR JON CORZINE:** The issue in a national debate, and I am not trying to be critical, is that this is not an identifiable issue in the general public's mind. Paid family insurance is just not a concept that is sitting in anybody's mind, so it is not a point of debate at this point. I think it is a missed opportunity, frankly, not to make this a clear-cut issue of family values that are real.

The point about the cost-benefit in an individual's life versus in a community's life is that when people go through catastrophic health situations, people without a loved one's care, and those without insurance, end up going to emergency rooms. The ripple cost effect is enormous. We ought to be putting down markers. In the case of New Jersey's paid family leave, the leave is paid for by the individuals themselves. It is a real insurance program. I think it needs to be identified as a benefit for the broader society, not just for the individual, and we ought to clearly make it a case of family values. I am certainly going to do that next year.

**Paid family insurance is just not a concept that is sitting in anybody's mind, so it is not a point of debate at this point. I think it is a missed opportunity, frankly, not to make this a clear-cut issue of family values...**

—Governor Jon Corzine

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** The Heritage Foundation<sup>19</sup> has a report that is culled from testimony on the Family Medical Leave Act that is just anecdotes from 100 employers of the employees who abused leave. They put a cover on it and that is the extent of the analysis on that side. So I do not think we would want to hire them to get into the cost of not having paid family leave.

**DAN CANTOR:** Just to amplify that, family leave is widely popular. It is not that salient for lots of people, but I am convinced that if we actually had an election, it would not be that hard to say, so and so would not vote on it. We have plenty of opportunities in New York State. I'm thinking about 15 mothers with newborns outside the office of, I do not know, Senator Maltese<sup>20</sup>, for example, saying: why not?

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.heritage.org/>

<sup>20</sup> Senator Serphin Maltese is a Republican New York State Senator representing Queens.

I do have a short riff on what Ana was saying. I was on my favorite website this morning, [www.yourparentingsolutions.com](http://www.yourparentingsolutions.com).

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** Your second favorite website.

**DAN CANTOR:** My second favorite. Fathers who take time off when their children are newborn apparently are closer to their children throughout their entire lives. There is apparently a lot of data on this that shows that that bonding early in life for fathers is very powerful. For mothers, breastfeeding gets established, vaccination schedules get achieved, babies stay healthier and thrive. The return on investment is powerful psychologically, as well as in all the other ways.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** You mentioned fathers. Actually, the Joint Economic Committee, led by our own Senator Schumer<sup>21</sup> and Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney<sup>22</sup>, who participated in a marketplace panel on paid sick leave<sup>23</sup> in June, commissioned a report looking at the status of paid family leave in Fortune 100 companies. The results were relatively positive and, again, this goes to Governor Corzine's point that the opposition comes mainly from the spokespeople for small business. So perhaps it is not useful for us to lump together business as the category of opposition.

Three-fourths of those who responded—about half responded—offered mothers paid parental leave, either through paid family or disability, but only one-third offered fathers leave. So my question in thinking about this is: is it strategic for us to make this a woman's issue? Or does it need to be cast more broadly? We know generally when we talk about family values that we are often talking about women and the many burdens that they have to juggle. But is it useful to think of this as a strategic kind of political fault line and exploit it as a woman's issue? Or should we be breaking out of that type? We have a vice-presidential nominee, for example, whose husband is the primary caregiver. So are we perpetuating something by making this a woman's issue or is that a more politically useful strategy?

**PATRICIA SMITH:** I think that we have got to make it a family values issue. I think that realistically, if we look at the experience in California, it is true that women take this lead more than men do, but that is just a reflection, I think, of the cultural values that this country has at this point in time. But for every woman who is taking leave, there is some man who is connected to that situation.

We have to make this a question of family values and that is a problem that we have in this country. Because when you say family values, and then you talk about businesses, there is often a big disconnect. As if your family is supposed to be somewhere else: your family life is somewhere else and your work life is here.

Until we actually get a better sense that the two are intertwined it is going to be very difficult to sell this as family values in the workplace.

Two sessions ago, the Assembly had hearings on the family leave bill and it was interesting to listen to the businesses who came in talking about how the world was going to fall apart if we did this. I have to say it really was amazing: a situation where the proposal on the table was \$170 a week for 12 weeks and this is going to make everybody stay home for the rest of their life? It was amazing.

**ANA OLIVEIRA:** Although there is a disproportionate burden that women currently carry in terms of working and caretaking at home, it does not mean that we want to stay there. We use that as a leadership opportunity to actually look for a change, but it is a universal change— that is what I think is happening. This is a family issue and, in general, it is a mistake to think that women's issues are issues genetically bound to us, issues reproductively bound to us. Human rights issues are women's issues. Salary and pay issues are women's issues. There are men's issues too. Dan just gave wonderful examples of the power of the caretaking role being shared and taken on by all.

I think that we are looking for two things. We are looking to address that double conflict and load immediately, but we are also looking for a transformation that gets results in the long term. Parenting actually can be exercised by many, not just by the women, not just by the mother.

Understanding the family requires thinking about the family as economic households or sustainable households. 58% of families living in poverty are headed by single mothers with children. These include working women, which is part of the importance of this. Often, these households have networks of support. They are multigenerational. They can be not just with a parental partner, or with somebody that is like a partner, a sexual partner. They are often sources of support for caretaking that are more invisible.

I am happy that there is a little room in this conversation to allow for that discussion because in most communities of color and poor communities, arrangements around household survival are not geared toward one single arrangement. I think that we are making great strides in being able to honor them as we talk about caretaking and what it takes in the little economic unit and life unit, however it is composed.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** Leave is not only about taking care of a newborn child. A significant number of working people have responsibility for taking care of the older people in their family. But Dan thinks it should be a women's issue.

**We have to make this a question of family values and that is a problem that we have in this country. Because when you say family values, and then you talk about businesses, there is often a big disconnect. As if your family is supposed to be somewhere else...**

—Commissioner Patricia Smith

21 Senator Chuck Schumer, a Democrat, represents New York State.

22 Representative Carolyn Maloney represents the east side of Manhattan and Astoria, Queens in the U.S. House of Representatives.

23 See [http://www.drummajorinstitute.org/events/unique\\_event.php?ID=52](http://www.drummajorinstitute.org/events/unique_event.php?ID=52).

**DAN CANTOR:** I think that in a tactical sense. I am with you ideologically. But I think tactically, we just want to crush these people. Women are a higher percentage of the voting block. You have got to make this thing come alive. I just feel that tactically that will be the smarter way for us to go, at least for these next seven weeks.

**Leave is not only about taking care of a newborn child. A significant number of working people have responsibility for taking care of the older people in their family.**

—Andrea Batista Schlesinger

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** I love it when my panelists do exactly what I knew they were going to do. That is perfect.

**PATRICIA SMITH:** I do not think Dan was at the Assembly hearing where the small business owner, a woman, was there crying about how this was going to destroy her business.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** Can we talk about that? Actually, to drill down a little bit, everybody now understands that New Jersey's family leave policy is employee-paid, that it is a social insurance program. The law in New Jersey, I believe, is that for businesses with more than 25 workers—Julie can correct me— a worker who takes leave will not be fired. That is part of the insurance.

**JULIE:** Fifty or more.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** For companies with fifty or more employees, the employee can take leave and will not be fired.

Is it really fair to say that there would not be an impact on small businesses that we should actually talk about? At least for the sake of fairness, in terms of looking at this in a rigorous way. According to the Business Council—who feels that “New York already struggles with job-creation costs and mandates that are among the nation’s highest”<sup>24</sup>—these high costs and mandates are the main reasons why New York’s long-term growth is so weak relative to the nation’s and even to similar competitor states like New Jersey and Pennsylvania. That was a quote from Thomas Minnick of the Business Council of New York State.<sup>25</sup> According to the Business Council, only 2% of the half million business establishments in New York State employ 100 or more employees so we are mainly a small business state. Is there any legitimacy to their argument that family leave will negatively harm business?

**GOVERNOR JON CORZINE:** In New Jersey—and I do not know the statistics in New York—I believe that 35 percent of our work force is in small businesses, which are 50 people and under.

I think this is logically ridiculous. If someone needs to take off work for a child or a family member, they are going to in a high percentage of cases, particularly

in low-wage situations. This is where we are providing the insurance and the support, and rightfully so, in my view. This is the reason that large business does not actually tend to focus on family leave as much. If what is going to take place is going to happen anyway, then why in God’s name would we not want to have somebody pay for the insurance that would allow them to get two-thirds pay or at least some replacement of their wages—I would even like to see full replacement. It is an inconsistent argument. It would argue that if someone’s child was going through chemotherapy, or my parents were, or I was in a coma, that my family was not going to show up because they have a low-wage job. It just does not happen. I do not know the statistics because we do not keep statistics along those lines, but I just think it’s illogical in the scheme of human relationships. What we are doing is confirming what is already happening and creating a situation where there can be economics that are satisfactory for it.

**If someone needs to take off work for a child or a family member, they are going to in a high percentage of cases, particularly in low-wage situations. This is where we are providing the insurance and the support, and rightfully so, in my view... What we are doing is confirming what is already happening and creating a situation where there can be economics that are satisfactory for it.**

—Governor Jon Corzine

I am about to leave, but I want to say that I think we ought to talk about this as a family values issue. But the fact is that women are going to relate to it, not men, to start with. Take care.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** Thank you, Governor Corzine.

**DAN CANTOR:** That is what I meant to say.

**PATRICIA SMITH:** Now that the Governor is leaving I am going to disagree with him. I think that family leave will have some impact on small businesses. I work with a lot of low-wage workers and, sure, if your child is in the emergency room, you are going to be there. But there are many situations where parents really are making economic decisions, where they weigh whether it is bad enough, if they can afford to take off. If individuals have some economic support, then I think it is logical to

assume that in some of those cases where they now do not give the care-giving, they will give the care-giving. So I think it will have some impact on small businesses.

**I work with a lot of low-wage workers and, sure, if your child is in the emergency room, you are going to be there. But there are many situations where parents really are making economic decisions, where they weigh if it is bad enough, if they can afford to take off.**

—Commissioner Patricia Smith

But I think that, again, we have to look at it as a larger issue, not just at the impact on business. While there will be some inconveniences for business from time to

time, I also think that employees are going to be much more productive employees when they are in the workplace because they are not worrying about this, they are not preoccupied about this. To give business their due, we cannot say there is not going to be any impact. But we have to use a return on investment analysis and say

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.bcnys.org/inside/labor/2007/familyleave testimony060507.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> The Business Council of New York State is a public policy advocate for employers. For more information, see <http://www.bcnys.org/>.

that, overall, the return on investment is going to be worth whatever inconveniences some small businesses may have from time to time.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** I want to open it up to questions. A hand in the back. Introduce yourself first please.

**ABE MARKMAN:** My name is Abe Markman. I am with the New York Society for Ethical Culture<sup>26</sup>. And, by the way, we are having a breakfast forum on paid sick leave in November.

**ANDREA BATISTISTA SCHLESIGNER:** You are allowed only one plug.

**ABE MARKMAN:** I think it is a mistake, whether it is Governor Patterson or whether it is Obama, not to make this a key issue. The statistics and research I have found support the idea that this is more popular with the traditional family than it is across the board. When you talk about the key white working-class voter, these are people who would go for this, so it should be supported. By the way, Obama mentioned paid sick leave in his acceptance speech.

**PATRICIA SMITH:** I will take my one plug, which is that this has been a priority, both for the Spitzer and the Patterson administrations. Each of those governors had program bills that were developed. I would like to think that we are making progress because the Patterson administration program bill actually increased the amount of temporary disability on top of adding the paid family insurance. We actually got pretty close last year in New York State. It came down to, again, the argument of small businesses, the refusal of the State Senate to act on any bill that did not have a carve-out for businesses of 50 and less, and the refusal of the Patterson administration to allow that compromise.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** What is the Patterson administration's bottom line, 25 and under?

**PATRICIA SMITH:** No carve-out, the same as temporary disability insurance.

**DAN CANTOR:** Patterson's people have been fantastic on this and I do think we are going to actually get this done next year. I am optimistic, Patricia, that you will succeed in raising the level of temporary disability some as well, which will be nice. Just to speak to the questioner's comment, one could imagine raising this issue tremendously in terms of its saliency. For example, school vouchers. How did school vouchers become such a gigantic issue in America? A couple of whack jobs at the University of Chicago forty years ago started working on them.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** Do not bring my alma mater and the Governor's alma mater into this.

**DAN CANTOR:** Right. Then, here we are, and it is front and center. If the Democratic Party had a little more wit and determination on this, you could actually turn this into something that got talked about all the time: what do you mean you are against paid family insurance? How could you possibly be? But it takes focus, focus, focus on that sort of thing, which we have not seen. But it is certainly plausible.

**If the Democratic Party had a little more wit and determination on this, you could actually turn this into something that got talked about all the time: what do you mean you are against paid family insurance? How could you possibly be?**

—Dan Cantor

**CHAD MARLOW:** I just want to relate a personal experience for your comment and actually maybe give another one. When I was 23 years old, my father was hit by a drunk driver and, unfortunately, his condition at the time, and even today, is significantly worse than that of Governor Corzine. At the time, however, I happened to work for the federal government, for the Department of Justice in Washington D.C.. They have a program there where their employees are allowed to give, I believe it is, two hours of their own personal vacation time a month into a pool, which is then used for people who have family emergencies. They are paid full wages and it really is a safety net. There is no loss of money and there is no loss of hours because you have the vacation time go into another pool.

As an alternative, for me it was a life saver. I was there at my father's bedside every single day for a month and did not lose pay that I could not afford to. I point this out just as an alternative. As a political strategy, and I do not mean this to sound crass, but I find that one of the political parties seems to be a little bit more concerned about children before they are born than after they are born. As a child issue, the idea that there are infants who have to go into daycare after 14 days or 20 days, that is unconscionable. Beyond a woman's issue, I think that this is a children's issue. I would like to hear about your comments on both of those ideas.

**PATRICIA SMITH:** The State of New York actually has a similar program. The problem with that program is, going back to the carve-out issue, that that works for the federal government, state government, and Fortune 500 companies, where you have a lot of employees who contribute to the pool. But if you have a business that has 10 people in it, it is not going to work in that type of a situation. So it works for the larger employers, but not the small ones. There, it does not work. Again, it was a priority of this administration to make sure that we covered all employees in the state.

**ANA OLIVEIRA:** I agree that paid family insurance ought to be understood and perceived as a real universal issue. That is what I hear as the suggestion. That is the bottom. Paid family insurance is the lowest kind of universal, bottom level acknowledgement and support that the country can provide for its workers and its families. That is a different aspect of the conversation that can be and should be addressed. Flexible work forces work better, have better productivity, etcetera. But there is an aspect of the paid family insurance, in the case that we are talking

<sup>26</sup> See <http://www.nysec.org/>.

about, that is really a statement of value. That is why I think the family values angle is really important. It is really the values of lives. This has to do with the value of work, as well, because we are saying that when people are working, they need to be able to have the opportunity to care take and continue their employment in the marketplace.

**DAN CANTOR:** I think the pool is fantastic. It is solidarity at its best, in a sense, but so is what Patricia is saying. The idea of paid family insurance—we have all adopted

it here—is that it is a way for society to say, “We are paying for this ourselves.” We are saying, “Even though I may never draw this down, you might. Therefore, I am willing to put in.”

In New York, Patricia—correct me if I am wrong—the numbers are even smaller in terms of how much it is going to cost: 25/35 cents a week. But we are all willing to do it because we do not know which of us is going to need it.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** I will say that, not to be a buzz kill, but the idea that just clarifying that it is social insurance automatically means that it has support might not hold. Some are skeptical. We are at a time in which stopping Social Security privatization was one of the main thrusts of our work. We won that. Those who believe in Social Security as a form of social insurance won. So the interest in doing that politically may have lessened. But it is not like such a thing automatically inoculates. Which does not mean that you should not pursue that and whatever you are doing with the State Senate as a strategy. Question over here.

**DEBORAH KING:** Debbie King from 1199 SEIU. I am wondering about the question of 12 weeks versus six weeks. I have been involved in this issue and I know that in California they were looking for twelve weeks. It was supposed to be half employee-paid and half employer-paid. When they could not get the employer-paid through,

they ended up with six weeks. I think we really need twelve weeks. If we are going to have it employee-paid, nationally, we have to have 12 weeks.<sup>27</sup>

I am a recent grandmother and my daughter and my son-in-law struggled with how, after six weeks, they could possibly find child care. If we are looking to do something good in New York and we are also looking for a national precedent to help, we should really try—and I know

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**I am a recent grandmother and my daughter and my son-in-law struggled with how, after six weeks, they could possibly find child care. If we are looking to do something good in New York and we are also looking for a national precedent to help, we should really try—and I know how hard it has been for us to get this passed—we should really try not to have six weeks become the standard for a federal policy.**

—Deborah King

how hard it has been for us to get this passed—we should really try not to have six weeks become the standard for a federal policy. Could you comment on that?

**PATRICIA SMITH:** I can comment on that. The original bill that the Spitzer administration put forward had twelve weeks at \$170 a week. There was a lot of opposition from business about the twelve weeks. Even though it is not an issue of cost: we figured out that by cutting it down to six weeks, the cost would only decrease by about 10%. That is because people take the first six weeks before they take the second six weeks: so you are much more likely to take six weeks, even if you are not taking the twelve. The Patterson administration proposal did cut it down to six weeks, not because of the cost, but because there was a lot less opposition from small businesses. That is just one of the compromises we may or may not make. Everything is on the table in a new session with, maybe, a new Senate. I think that is what happened both in California and in New Jersey. It was a compromise that was made in response to the small business issues.

**DAN CANTOR:** Working Families is determined to keep it at 12 weeks. We think it is preposterous to go down.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** So, are we going to see an eight-week compromise, a nine-week compromise?

Part of the issue, to amplify the concern here, is that if all of the states adopt six weeks of leave, it will then be very difficult to make the case for something that is longer.

It will be much harder to go back than it will be, to some extent, to get the support and the urgency and the community and the passion that Governor Corzine talked about to go, okay, well, now we absolutely must make it nine weeks. But, alas, Working Families says it is going to be twelve.

I want to ask a question to the two people that Governor Corzine recognized here as being the folks who did the implementation. I want them to mull over a question which we will then come back to. What is one thing you wished you had done differently, some piece of advice to New York. I did not want to ask the Governor that: I did not want to push him out of the door. If you could think about that, we will come back to you. The question in the front.

**DEBBIE BRANCH:** I am Debbie Branch. I understand that you want to push paid family leave. It sounds good: family, this, that. I was very offended by what the Governor said, that women will relate to this. I have done a lot of sales jobs where you sit in cubicles. I hear men screaming: “I would come home right now, but I cannot.” What is going on? Everybody has stress. I would like it to be thought of more as wellness leave. You cannot work if you are not well. You are going to punish me because I did not get married and have a kid? I do not think that that is right.

<sup>27</sup> See [http://www.edd.ca.gov/disability/Paid\\_Family\\_Leave.htm](http://www.edd.ca.gov/disability/Paid_Family_Leave.htm).

Alberta Hunter<sup>28</sup> was a wonderful woman who used to sing at the Cookery.<sup>29</sup> I walked by every day as a teenager. I think of that lady as my mother. If she is about to die, I should be able to be there for her. It's none of your business if this woman didn't give birth to me or not. I cannot sit at work and be well knowing this is going on in my life.

I would like it to be thought of more as wellness leave. You cannot work if you are not well. You are going to punish me because I did not get married and have a kid? I do not think that that is right.

—Debbie Branch

out everything. Then she said, “How many cars do you need?” I said, “What are you talking about? I only need one.” She said, “How many kids have you got?” I said, “I do not have any kids.” She said, “Well, I can't help you.”

**ANDREA BATISTIA SCHLESINGER:** Let me stop you there to get into this question, which is certainly a valid one. People increasingly have all different kinds of familial relationships, care-giving associations. To what extent does our concept of paid family insurance address that reality?

**PATRICIA SMITH:** It does not address it very well, quite frankly. One of the reasons is that the guide we have been using is the Family Medical Leave Act, the federal act. The bill that we put forward in New York State was broader than the California bill and, I think, the New Jersey bill, too, in that it covered, again, family members. It covered grandparents to deal with the multigenerational issue. It covered domestic partners. So it covered a broader range, but it clearly was still within the context of some quasi-traditional familial concept.

**ANA OLIVEIRA:** This is a real issue. The Governor stressed that there are no carve-outs. Commissioner, you just said that as well. There are low-paid workers, part-time workers who would tend to benefit more than other segments of the workforce that have health insurance, leave, and access to other benefits. It is precisely among poorer families and poorer networks and poorer communities that the issue that you are raising is more important. It is because other sources of support are not already there.

In my mind, we do need to stretch this, maybe using degrees of separation. We can push to recognize, either with this bill or with similar initiatives, what I would call “significant other.” I mean that not in the old way, meaning a partner, but meaning the significant other people in our lives for whom we are a significant-other caretaker. I think it is the nature of that relationship that it is not accidental. That is where the caretaking relationship occurs. I do not know of any act or bill or insurance proposal right now that talks about the definition of the caretaking relationship that widens the eligibility criteria. Your point is very well taken.

**DAN JACOBI:** My name is Dan Jacobi. I am with Democracy for New York City.<sup>30</sup> I would like to start by trying to bring Commissioner Smith and Governor Corzine a little closer together on the question of impact on small business, which is that when somebody does not take time off to care for a loved one, the tension is going to impact that person's ability to work, which will then have a great impact on a small business. That's just something to throw in the mix.

My question is really another devil's advocate question, which is: what safeguards—we will take the New York bill—are in the bill to prevent people from saying, “Oh, well, you see, my so and so is sick and I have to take time off?” That's going to be one of those arguments from *that* side of the aisle.

**PATRICIA SMITH:** We have the same safeguards that exist currently for the temporary disability insurance, which is that you can be required to bring in a doctor's note that that individual—you say my son is sick—that your son really was sick. That is an issue that I think we have pretty much taken care of because

One of the advantages of having a temporary disability insurance program—I do not mean from a societal point of view, but just from a legislative point of view—is that we already have infrastructure in place that can actually handle a lot of these issues.

—Commissioner Patricia Smith

we have the same safeguards that we have now for temporary disability insurance. One of the advantages of having a temporary disability insurance program—I do not mean from a societal point of view, but just from a legislative point of view—is that we already have an infrastructure in place that can actually handle a lot of these issues.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** I wanted to ask you a question, Ana, because we had this event in June on paid sick leave<sup>31</sup> and David Jones<sup>32</sup> was on the panel. I had read from another Heritage Foundation report and checked to see that, indeed, the Heritage Foundation offers paid sick leave, but did not appear at all for paid family. David said, “A lot of the folks in the audience—since this is a tactical, “how” conversation—come to be inspired by other models. They come from the nonprofit sector, from labor organizations. But to what extent are we walking the talk?” As a foundation head, is this something that you talk about with your grantees: having the ability, the incentives, the security—several of your grantees may even be in the room—so that they are modeling this commitment to social justice?

**ANA OLIVEIRA:** We were talking about small business and now we are talking about the not-for-profit sector a little bit. I think not-for-profit is a tax status, right? We are still all little businesses. We still have to have income and expenses and a balance sheet and be viable. There's nothing about the not-for-profit condition that protects

30 See <http://www.dfnyc.org/>.

31 See [http://www.drummajorinstitute.org/events/unique\\_event.php?ID=52](http://www.drummajorinstitute.org/events/unique_event.php?ID=52).

32 David Jones is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Community Service Society of New York, a not-for-profit organization that promotes economic advancement and full civic participation for low-income New Yorkers. For more information, see <http://www.cssny.org/>.

28 Alberta Hunter was an American blues singer.

29 The Cookery was a blues club in New York City's Greenwich Village that was popular during the 1920s and 1930s.

us from the same financial challenges that a small business has. I just wanted to say that. I think it is very hard.

I'll make two comments, one about the sector in general and then I'll talk about our particular grantees, which is a very interesting reality that I want to share with you.

In general, the small business aspect of the not-for-profit world is very hard, period. We do not count on some of the tax benefits and some of the business improvement district incentives and other things that for-profit small businesses count on. There is not an initiative in government to invest in the not-for-profit sector as a little business sector.

The tax status is very welcome, but beyond that there is not that other understanding of the not-for-profit sector, from a financial point of view, that actually honors how many people it employs. It is an issue for us to be able to provide benefit packages. We would do a lot better if we could, for instance, buy benefits in a pool together. When you are a little business and you buy health insurance, or you buy other things, it is much more expensive than if you buy in very large numbers. We need to get our act together on this in the not-for-profit world.

The particular grantee partners of the foundation are typically emerging responses, tiny little responses. As businesses, they are very small so they struggle very much. They have very small budgets. Seventy-five percent of the organizations we fund have budgets below \$1 million, just to give you a sense of that. It is particularly difficult just to get people paid even as they are doing the work.

Part of what we do is invest in the emerging responses so that they can constitute themselves as viable small businesses and pay themselves and their staff in appropriate ways. But, in general, providing benefits is a very big deal. In different sectors of the not-for-profit world, it impacts women disproportionately. I am sorry to say that, but that is the case with short-term disability; some organizations can afford that and others cannot.

I do think, coming back to our topic, that the universal approach really helps the sector. It would help us look at ourselves and make other financial arrangements viable, ones that would propel the walk-the-talk kind of issue that you are raising.

**DAN CANTOR:** We are campaigning for paid family leave with full pay for eight weeks. People in this room should give four hours over the next two months. You could contact Donna or you could write to me. We could tell you what to do that will help us make this bill become a law. My e-mail is [dcantor@workingfamiliesparty.org](mailto:dcantor@workingfamiliesparty.org) or you can contact Donna. We can do it.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** Can I turn now to the Jersey question that I asked our Jersey contingent? Could you speak about a lesson learned that New York should keep in mind? You can each offer a lesson or you can compromise and come up with one lesson.

**JULIE KASHEN:** First, I want to say that family leave insurance is the best way to say it. I did research on that in 1999. I did some focus groups and I think family leave insurance is a better phrase than paid family leave.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** So you are saying the Governor did not make that up?

**JULIE KASHEN:** No. Well, I will give him credit for lots of things. The campaign in New Jersey was great. The coalition was amazing. One of the things that always struck me—because I came in at the beginning of the Corzine administration, so there was already a bill in existence that had been proposed—was that we compromised with ourselves a little bit too much. We negotiated with ourselves. The

bill that started out had only employee-paid. It was still twelve weeks. It was still for everyone. But especially because we had already given up on the employee-paid piece, we ended up fighting a lot about the twelve weeks, which ended up six weeks, and about the small business carve-out, which we won on. The more we could have put in there that employers could have fought against, the better off we would have been. Maybe we would have had an eight- or ten-week bill. The Governor would have been thrilled with a twelve-week bill. That would be my advice.

**DAVID SOCOLOW:** First of all, we wish you all the best. We would like to be joined by someone on this side of the country. Washington State did a five week bill and California only did a six week bill. We would like something better. With respect to the terminology, I think I will echo Julie's point. Family leave insurance is an important piece of terminology, but not for convincing the public. This is the one thing that I think we did not realize. Every legislator, no matter how progressive... We were blessed—some might say blessed—to have a Democratic Assembly and a Democratic Senate. But, boy, it was difficult getting it through an all-Democratic legislature. The reason is that every legislator, no matter what else they are, and no matter how progressive they are, is running a small business and a legislative district office of three or four people. They were asking: what is going to happen to my little shop if one of my worker's parents gets sick or one of my worker's children gets sick? They were internally buying the arguments of the small business lobby at a level that I do not think we properly addressed. You have to address the small business issue, not through a carve-out, but through people understanding what has

**One of the things that always struck me...was that we compromised with ourselves a little bit too much. We negotiated with ourselves... [W]e ended up fighting a lot about the twelve weeks, which ended up six weeks, and about the small business carve-out, which we won on. The more we could have put in there that employers could have fought against, the better off we would have been.**

—Julie Kashen

been said here before, that this is actually taking care of something that the workers would already be doing anyway, which is taking leave.

[B]oy, it was difficult getting [family leave insurance] through an all-Democratic legislature. The reason is that every legislator, no matter what else they are, and no matter how progressive they are, is running a small business and a legislative district office of three or four people. They were internally buying the arguments of the small business lobby at a level that I do not think we properly addressed.

—David Socolow

In terms of emphasis—and this gets a little bit to the question of whether this is a women’s issue or not—we found that both for building the coalition and for reminding people about family leave insurance, it is important that it not just be about care for a newborn. If you are lucky enough to live in a TDI state, a state with temporary disability, which New York and New Jersey both are, we already have, under the radar screen, paid family leave

for mothers who give birth to children, which is most of the caring for newborn that goes on, because that is what TDI gives you. For the disability of recovering from giving birth to a child, there are TDI benefits. But there are not benefits for the father and there are not for someone taking care of their parent who might be hurt or sick or their spouse or domestic partner or their child who is sick. Even though that may only be 10% or 15% of the cases of people claiming family leave, those experiences are the best anecdotes.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** Great. Let’s see if some of that advice will be heeded. Dan, what could you imagine putting in the bill to distract, I mean, to serve as an initial point of conversation so as not to so quickly get to compromising one year off? What would you put in there?

**DAN CANTOR:** Employer-paid or a shared employer-/employee-paid approach and 12 weeks of leave, we have to keep that.

**PATRICIA SMITH:** I think that we could imagine the bill that was actually introduced last year in the Assembly that had 12 weeks of employer-paid leave with 55% of the employee’s salary up to \$550 a week and indexed for inflation.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** Can you explain that? You mentioned the amount \$170. Just so people completely understand what that is about, can you explain that number and its relationship to inflation or its lack of relationship to inflation?

**PATRICIA SMITH:** There is a lack of relationship.

The TDI statute now allows you to get 50% of your salary up to a maximum of \$170. Virtually everyone in the State of New York is getting \$170 when they get a TDI benefit and that is in the statute. It has not been updated since 1989.

There are two concepts involved. One is that we will raise the amount of the maximum. So you saw a Patterson administration bill that said \$340 would be the maximum amount and another bill that said \$550 would be the maximum amount. I think the Patterson bill said 50% of your salary; the other one said 55%. The second concept—indexing—is that you do not have a finite amount so that as inflation goes up, the amount stays the same. Instead, you would index the amount of money to whatever—inflation rate, CPI, whatever. That happened with the workers’ compensation reformat: they indexed the amount there.<sup>33</sup>

We have another problem in the states called unemployment insurance and that amount stands at \$400 and has stood that way for 10 years. It is not indexed and it is going to take a legislative act to increase that. That is the concept of indexing.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** How likely do you think it is that whatever is ultimately passed in New York will include indexing? It seems pretty ridiculous to fight so hard for \$170 a week. Again, I do not mean to be a buzz kill, but how likely is it that ultimately you will see both an index and a meaningful increase?

**PATRICIA SMITH:** I do not think it is too likely, frankly.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** I thought I was the buzz kill.

**PATRICIA SMITH:** I think indexing is a really heavy lift.

I think that you are not going to see \$170. I think you are going to see an increase. I am not exactly sure what that will be, but this sort of goes to David Socolow’s advice about not negotiating against yourself. I am sitting here representing one part of the administration that says, “Yes, yes, yes.” But there is another part of the administration that says, “Maybe not, maybe not, maybe not.”

I think indexing is a really heavy lift.  
—Commissioner Patricia Smith

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** Are you going to tell us which part?

**PATRICIA SMITH:** No, I’m not.

There is a certain amount of negotiating among ourselves that’s going on internally and that is why we need everybody in this room to be the outside folks that are pushing so that you can negotiate for me.

**MARIA CILENTI:** I am Maria Cilenti from the New York City Bar Association. I wonder if you could talk a little bit about the interplay between the pending family leave insurance bill and paid sick days. I am thinking about a small employer who has no paid sick days and an employee gets the flu. I actually had the flu for the first

<sup>33</sup> The Workers’ Compensation Reform bill was signed into law by New York Governor Eliot Spitzer on March 13, 2007. See <http://www.state.ny.us/governor/press/0313071.html>.

time last year and I took five days off, which was a lot for me. But I imagine that there are employees who would not be covered by family leave insurance because they would not otherwise qualify for TDI. I just wondered if you could talk a little bit about the interaction between those two things.

**PATRICIA SMITH:** There are a lot of employers that do not have paid sick days. That is just the reality. The amount of TDI—\$170—is really underutilized in the state because in a situation where you were sick for five days, you would qualify for TDI for those five days. The difference, obviously, is that you are not going to get your full salary. Five days is a week and you will get \$170. So paid sick days are an even heavier lift.

**DAN CANTOR:** Much heavier. It is much more expensive. It is preposterous that we do not have paid sick days, either, as a statutory benefit. It is one of the few things

we could do just in New York City that would not require state enabling legislation. But it would be a heavy lift here. The Mayor is super-hostile to it.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** For those interested in more information on paid sick leave, particularly as a city action, we did an event with folks from San Francisco.<sup>34</sup> They became the first big city to do this. We did that event in June so you can grab all kinds of stuff from the website on what they did.

I want to pull out a little bit more. Is there tension in terms of picking our advocacy priority?

**DAN CANTOR:** Sure.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** So which wins?

**DAN CANTOR:** You always have to make choices. We have to decide which of these things we are going to fight for. The Paid Family Leave Coalition<sup>35</sup> has created enough momentum over these last years that it feels like it would be a shame not to go this last little distance and establish this benefit. It will have a cascading effect nationally. I believe that this will be yet another one like the minimum wage: eventually enough states do it that the country has to do it. It seems as though we are at a moment where a little bit more effort from a lot of people, many of them

in this room—all of them should be in this room, actually—will do it. You have to make those choices. As Aristotle reminded us, Andrea, in politics there is no substitute for judgment, so we have got to make one.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** Wow. Very impressive Aristotle reference from Dan.

Donna Dolan, who introduced the event and runs the Paid Family Leave Coalition, might have something to say on the paid sick leave issue.

**DONNA DOLAN:** Yes. Our coalition is now working to organize around paid sick leave—paid sick days I should say, rather than leave—here in New York City. We are working with A Better Balance<sup>36</sup>. If you have any questions about that, please see us.

In terms of the action item for family leave insurance, we have sign-up sheets, we have postcards being printed as we speak that say, “New Yorkers value our families,” talking about family values. Other postcards say, “New Yorkers value our jobs.” You can sign up to get those postcards for your organizations before you leave here today. We also draw your attention, in terms of an action item, to our website: [timetocarenewyork.org](http://timetocarenewyork.org). You can send your legislators up in Albany an email telling them that you want family leave insurance, paid family leave, passed. Thank you.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** Everyone should know that this event is being liveblogged on DMIBlog<sup>37</sup>, so you will be able to find references to some of these resources if you visit the blog a little bit later. Let us try to get a couple more questions in, but they have got to be very quick, focused questions.

**QUESTIONER:** The Governor spoke about how a lot of people are not aware of this issue. It is not on their radar screen. What occurred to me when he said that is, why not find a way to integrate, fold this into sort of an omnibus, human rights/family values bill? Find some progressive legislator to introduce it in Congress and go for the works. Something like 16 weeks of leave with indexing and all of these things and fold it into a whole kind of human rights/family values bill at the federal level. That provides a spear to throw at the problem at that level.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** What we will do is, let’s take a couple of these audience questions and then the panel will respond. Let’s do that.

**MATT STOLLER:** My name is Matt Stoller. My question is sort of related. The issue strikes me as something similar to minimum wage: it is a nice thing to do for a lot of people, but it is not clear to me how it supports an architecture of improved chances for other progressive pieces of legislation. One of the things that the conservatives do is that every piece of legislation they put forward, every policy move, helps

It is preposterous that [New York does] not have paid sick days...It is one of the few things we could do just in New York City that would not require state enabling legislation. But it would be a heavy lift here.

—Dan Cantor

You always have to make choices. We have to decide which of these things we are going to fight for. The Paid Family Leave Coalition has created enough momentum over these last years that it feels like it would be a shame not to go this last little distance and establish this benefit. It will have a cascading effect nationally.

—Dan Cantor

<sup>34</sup> See [http://www.drummajorinstitute.org/events/unique\\_event\\_print.php?ID=52](http://www.drummajorinstitute.org/events/unique_event_print.php?ID=52).

<sup>35</sup> See <http://www.timetocareny.org/>.

<sup>36</sup> See <http://www.abetterbalance.org/cms/index.php>.

<sup>37</sup> See [http://www.dmiblog.com/archives/2008/09/liveblogging\\_the\\_marketplace\\_o\\_4.html](http://www.dmiblog.com/archives/2008/09/liveblogging_the_marketplace_o_4.html).

How does [paid family insurance] pave the way for other pieces of legislation? How does it create a more fertile atmosphere for progressive advocacy? Where does it create new revenue streams for progressive advocacy? Where does it create new ways of thinking about organizing and new ways of organizing?

—Matt Stoller

support other parts of their agenda. What I am wondering is, how does this pave the way for other pieces of legislation? How does it create a more fertile atmosphere for progressive advocacy? Where does it create new revenue streams for progressive advocacy? Where does it create new ways of thinking about organizing and new ways of organizing?

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** Dan, do you want to take these? Both are related.

**DAN CANTOR:** If we could make the work/family tension—this idea of the time budget people just stretch between work and home, getting the kids out the door in the morning if they have them, taking care of people—if we could make that issue actually come alive, that would be hugely valuable for us.

We have privatized social reproduction, as Donna said in her opening remarks. We are trying to say that this is a social responsibility. If you could actually win this fight, it would set the stage for further gains, plus it would make people's lives better. That is not trivial and I know you do not think it is. I am not suggesting you think it is. I am not exactly sure how it produces resources for organizing which is what I obsess about all the time. Sometimes you have got to do stuff that is just the right thing to do and you hope that it will change the debate. That is what we are trying to do here: say that the work and family issues are not in some private realm only. They are also part of our responsibility to each other. As for socialism now, let's go.

If we could make the work/family tension—this idea of the time budget people just stretch between work and home, getting the kids out the door in the morning if they have them, taking care of people—if we could make that issue actually come alive, that would be hugely valuable for us.

—Dan Cantor

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** I want to respond to Matt as a movement organization think tank. I think it also does a couple of other things.

One, I think it enables us to point to concrete achievements. Often the tension is, especially if you run a think tank: how does this progressive stuff actually play out in policy? For example, the right has you sign the no-tax pledge. You sign it, so there is a policy manifestation of the values of your movement. The reason that we wanted to talk about this today is that it provides that balance. This is a concrete manifestation of the values of the progressive movement that enables us to make a very distinct argument about the differences between the left and the right.

The other thing I think it does is that it allows—and I think Joel Barkin might still be here from the Progressive States Network<sup>38</sup>, which is trying to make legislatures more progressive—policymakers who are progressive to point to something that they are able to do on a local level. It highlights their leadership and I think that is important.

It is a policy aim, but also gives progressive policymakers not only something to do, but a platform locally to talk about progressive values. That is meaningful, as well.

Let's have another question.

**NANCY RANKIN:** I am Nancy Rankin from the Better Balance and the Paid Leave Coalition in New York.

There has been discussion that right now we may be missing a great opportunity to raise the visibility of this issue. I cannot help thinking how great it would be—and I will put Ana and the Commissioner on the spot a little bit—to have a pool of foundation funding for advertising to raise the visibility of this issue. I have been thinking how nice it would be to have a major speech by the Governor on this issue. It seems that it would be a very inside Albany fight and that a lot of the details that Commissioner Smith has been describing are likely best kept a secret. There has been no coverage in *The New York Times* or other newspapers about this. The public is not aware how close we are to getting this needed benefit. So I am just asking what all of you can do and what we can do to put more resources right now to raising the visibility of this issue?

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** Great. Who is on the hot seat first?

**PATRICIA SMITH:** I will be on the hot seat first. The Governor is very supportive of this concept. It was one of the few issues in the labor arena last year that he was very solid on. Whether he is going to give a speech on this or not, I am not so sure. I am not so sure this is on-message this year. The Governor's message this year is all about fiscal responsibility and it is hard to get him off that message. So I do not know if I have a good answer for you on that one, so that is why I went first.

**ANA OLIVEIRA:** Money is always a little better answer in an immediate way, right?

I think we are about to have a proposal from Better Balance in front of us and I think we are in a very good position to be able to support you in that. It is going through our process in the next two or three weeks, as you know, so that is very good for

<sup>38</sup> Joel Barkin is the Executive Director of the Progressive States Network. For more information, see <http://www.progressivestates.org/>.

the Foundation. We have a participatory grant making process, I want everybody to know, so it is not like myself or the Board alone can make these decisions. But there is an incredible amount of positive regard for our partnership with the Better Balance coalition as a very important mission.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** Another reason to come to Marketplace of Ideas events.

**ANA OLIVEIRA:** I am obliged and firmly believe in that participation. I know many of you are members of that process at the Foundation. The Foundation's mission is concerned with economic self-sufficiency and autonomy for women and families in communities.

**Policy change is not appropriately defined in the foundation world as an incredible return on investment.**

—Ana Oliveira

I think part of your question, too, is: to what extent can we leverage other philanthropic dollars? Typically our grants are now \$50,000 and, although that can be very helpful, it is hardly sufficient for the kind of investment that you are talking about. I want to acknowledge some other philanthropists that are here with us today. There is a role for us, the New York Women's Foundation, to play and to play with our partners that are here in raising that conversation in a very immediate way. We are very, very pleased to do that.

Policy change is not appropriately defined in the foundation world as an incredible return on investment. That is some internal homework that we need to do. We have totally forgotten that there are incredible opportunities to generate a change that benefits so many. Usually we identify policy with lobbying. That is not what we are talking about as far as the foundation partnership. I wanted to acknowledge that and say that. It is definitely something that we are very interested in partnering in. We can get very practical after this and figure out what steps we can take together.

I just want to clarify one thing. When I answered the question about the benefits for the not-for-profit sector, I was not answering for the Foundation itself. Dan said we provide eight weeks and I just wanted to say that the philanthropic world, in general, tends to provide more benefits than other sectors of the not-for-profit sector. We have a certain amount of privilege that way that I want to acknowledge here. The Foundation does provide between eight and twelve weeks paid leave, just so that you know that, but we are not different from other foundations, from other philanthropic entities. That does not resolve the issue that we are talking about, but I wanted to clarify that those disparities exist within the not-for-profit world as well.

**We have to get a champion. We have to tell a story. I know it is so tedious. It is just like the old Richard Nixon line: just when you are sick of saying it, that is the first time they hear it. You've got to say it over and over and over again.**

—Dan Cantor

**DAN CANTOR:** It seems that what DMI has tried to do these last years is figure out how to tee up all of these really good ideas and help drive them home. Now we are at the moment where DMI's work, in a sense, is done. Over these next couple of weeks, if you have got three hours, give us a Saturday, give us an evening, and we will spin. I am serious. We have got some very serious bloggers in the room here today.

If we can win one of these races and have part of the story be that one of the reasons that so and so won was because of his or her commitment to the establishment of family leave insurance, it becomes a story. And then we say that over and over again. We will show up in Albany. People think, "Oh, so and so won." This is how things actually move in Albany. We have to get a champion. We have to tell a story. I know it is so tedious. It is just like the old Richard Nixon line: just when you are sick of saying it, that is the first time they hear it. You've got to say it over and over and over again.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** Nixon, Aristotle.

I want to ask folks to close. Again, we are live blogging this event. If you have specific questions that we were not able to get to, post them on the site and we'll try to get answers from the panelists based on their availability to respond and requests for any other information. So the conversation will continue in that sense if we were not able to get to the questions now.

In closing, is it going to happen in New York? When is it going to happen? What will it take for it to happen?

**PATRICIA SMITH:** I think it is very, very close. And, what will it take for it happen? Donate some time to Dan.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** There is your plug.

**ANA OLIVEIRA:** I also believe it is going to happen because of the work of our grantee partners. I want to say, again, that we will do our part and increase our own commitment, but also leverage other commitments to help accelerate the process. This is an incredible milestone that we need to get to. It is part of the work that we will continue to do, but we also are partners for the work afterwards.

**DAN CANTOR:** Who knows? We will find out if it is going to make it. The work ahead has already been mentioned many times. Thank you for letting us do this.

**ANDREA BATISTA SCHLESINGER:** Thank you all very much.

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## ALSO FROM DMI

### NO ECONOMIC RECOVERY WITHOUT CITIES: THE URGENCY OF A NEW FEDERAL URBAN POLICY

June 2009 / President Obama's newly created White House Office of Urban Affairs presents a new opportunity for federal urban policy. The urban policies of previous administrations have viewed cities as problems or have held that the federal government could do best for cities by doing least. In contrast, the Office of Urban Affairs provides an opportunity to maximize the economic potential of cities through well-coordinated, productive relationships with the federal government. These relationships are particularly important to the success of the economic stimulus package and to economic recovery. DMI offers a number of policy principles to guide the Office's efforts to develop a strategy for metropolitan America.



### MIDDLECLASS.ORG 2008 CONGRESSIONAL SCORECARD

March 2009 / Who stood up for the middle class? We examine the good and bad decisions Congress made in 2008—from the February stimulus bill to the Senate filibusters that killed legislation to address the home mortgage crisis and to assist the struggling auto industry. We look at how the middle class gained from the New GI Bill and the Higher Education Act, and how ordinary Americans lost with the no-strings-attached bank bailout. Each member of Congress is graded on his or her votes for or against the middle class.



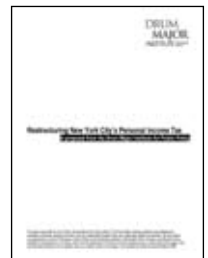
### DMI ON THE 2009 PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO CONGRESS

February 2009 / "The President's vision is an inspiration, and his accomplishments so far are significant. But in the context of the most severe economic crisis the nation has faced in generations, our actions must be still bolder." The Drum Major Institute's rapid analysis of Obama's State of the Union-like address hails the President's remarkable achievements for the current and aspiring middle class and calls for economic, health, education and energy policies commensurate with the tremendous challenges America faces.



### RESTRUCTURING NEW YORK CITY'S PERSONAL INCOME TAX

February 2009 / 224,000 New York City households are too poor to pay state and/or federal income taxes, yet still owe taxes to the city. Almost all are households with children, most are headed by single parents. DMI proposes eliminating city income taxes on these households and paying for it with a tax increase on the city's wealthiest residents. The plan was endorsed by New York City Council Speaker Christine Quinn, Councilmember David Yassky, and State Senator Liz Krueger.



### 2008 YEAR IN REVIEW

December 2008 / In this Year in Review, the Drum Major Institute for Public Policy offers a look back at 2008 through the best and worst of the year's public policy, including a program to expand health care access in San Francisco (one of the best) and the Paulson financial bailout plan (one of the worst). We also highlight on-the-ground stories from five American cities, include an idiosyncratic election timeline, and recommend the year's best books for progressives. As always, we provide a hawk's eye view of what the think tanks on the conservative right are up to and our 2008 Injustice Index, a by-the-numbers appraisal of the Bush legacy.



# Marketplace of Ideas

In the Marketplace of Ideas, we don't just talk about problems, we highlight policies to address them and the policymakers that made them work.

"The Drum Major Institute's recent forum on increasing accountability and developing better uses for economic development subsidies with Minnesota State Senator John Hottinger was both informative and enlightening. I found it so useful to hear about the ideas of both colleagues in government and well-informed advocates about effective legislation in other states, particularly Minnesota's progressive and far reaching bill."

—NEW YORK STATE SENATOR LIZ KRUEGER

# Ideas We've Brought to Market

For more information, please visit  
<http://www.drummajorinstitute.org/events/marketplaceofideas.php>

- **Preventing Predatory Mortgage Lending**  
with Minnesota Attorney General Lori Swanson
- **Increasing Accountability For Economic Development Subsidies**  
with Minnesota State Senator John Hottinger
- **Getting Special Interest Money Out of State Elections**  
with Arizona Activist Dennis Burke
- **Combating Global Warming through Congestion Pricing**  
with London Deputy Mayor Nicky Gavron
- **Making Prescription Drugs More Affordable**  
with Maine State Senator Sharon Treat
- **The Power of Restorative Justice**  
with San Francisco Sheriff Michael Hennessey
- **Rehabilitating Vacant Buildings Into Affordable Housing**  
with Boston Mayor Thomas Menino
- **Holding Corporations Accountable for Their Fair Share of Employee Health Costs**  
with Maryland State Senator Gloria Gary Lawlah
- **Preventing Wrongful Convictions and Exonerating the Innocent**  
with Dallas District Attorney Craig Watkins
- **Lowering the Cost of Insurance**  
with California Activist Harvey Rosenfield
- **Strengthening the Labor Movement**  
with Service Employees International Union President Andy Stern
- **Making Health Care Universal**  
with Former Vermont Governor Howard Dean
- **Promoting Access to Pre-School Education**  
with Oklahoma State Senator Penny Williams
- **Leveraging Government to Protect the People**  
with Former New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer
- **Tackling Environmental Injustice through Legislation**  
with U.S. Congresswoman Hilda Solis
- **Confronting the Need for Massive School Construction**  
with Concordia Incorporated Founder Steven Bingler



