

April 22, 2010

The Honorable Lynn Woolsey
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Workforce Protections
Committee on Education and Labor
US House of Representatives
2181 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Workforce Protections
Committee on Education and Labor
US House of Representatives
2101 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Response to H.R. 4855, The Work-Life Balance Award Act

Carol Evans, President, Working Mother Media

Madame Chairwoman, and Members of the Subcommittee, I am pleased to appear before you today to support the proposed Work-Life Balance Award Act of 2010 (H.R. 4855) introduced by Representatives Lynn Woolsey (CA) and George Miller (CA). I applaud this effort to raise awareness of work-life balance challenges faced by working mothers in the United States.

There are 31 million women in this country who are both employed and have children under the age of 18 living at home. Working mothers have fueled the U.S. economy for three decades by adding their productivity to the labor force while having children and raising the next generation of citizens. In recognition of the importance of keeping our workforce strong and our home front stable, government and companies should be doing all they can to support working moms.

In many countries around the world, government is in the lead in supporting working mothers, mandating paid parental leave, providing high-quality child care and requiring flexible work hours. In the United States, our government mandates unpaid maternity leave and requires equal pay by gender, but progressive support for working moms comes from companies—large and small, public and private, for profit and non-profit-- voluntarily leading the way.

In October of this year, *Working Mother* magazine will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Working Mother 100 Best Companies Award. This award began in 1986, when *Working Mother* magazine decided to shine a spotlight on the work-life balance needs of working moms by creating an award for companies that take a leadership position in supporting employees with children.

The Working Mother 100 Best Companies Award has set the standard for best practices in support of working moms year after year. Companies must apply for the award annually by submitting statistical data to the magazine.

The application includes some 600 questions on workforce compensation, child care, flexible work arrangements, parental leave policies, company culture, representation of women, health and wellness benefits and more. We measure not only programs and policies of companies, but also what percentage of employees has access to these benefits and how many employees actually use them.

The application is revised annually by our editors and researchers to reflect progress that has been made in every cluster of information in order to keep encouraging forward movement. We utilize proprietary software that objectively scores the data and comparatively ranks the companies. The corporate commitment needed to apply is enormous, as is the prestige generated by winning a place on the annual list.

We publish more than 90 pages of editorial about the Working Mother 100 Best in the October issue for our more than 2 million readers. We manage a public relations campaign that generates nearly a billion media impressions about work life balance.

We offer year-round coverage of our Best Companies initiatives on workingmother.com, making that information searchable and available to a broad universe of interested parties. We host the nation's largest conference on work life issues with the annual WorkLife Congress where 500 top human resource executives learn exactly how the programs, policies and practices of the Working Mother 100 Best Companies work so they can take these best practices back to their organizations.

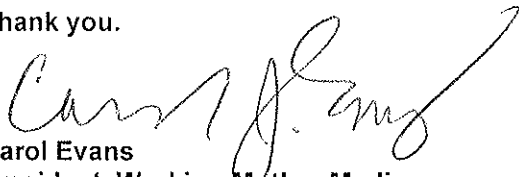
The award proposed in the Woolsey-Miller bill will add to the tremendous spotlight we shine on the needs of working families. I applaud this effort. A partnership between Working Mother and the U.S. government might alleviate some of the formidable challenges the committee would face in launching this effort.

The partnership would draw upon the enormous work we do for the Working Mother 100 Best Companies Award, allowing Congress to recognize our winners, celebrate them at a ceremony on Capitol Hill and participate in the WorkLife Congress. Our 25 years of expertise would make the award proposed in the Woolsey-Miller bill efficient as well as effective. *Working Mother* magazine has used our unique methodology, our proprietary software and our internal experts to support other workforce groups as well.

We reward the Best Companies for Multicultural Women, Best Law Firms for Women, Best Companies for Hourly Workers and Best of Congress, which has honored 26 members of this august body for the support they give to their own working mom and dad staffers.

Other organizations recognizing companies that excel at work life balance include the Families and Work Institute, Catalyst, and the Society of Women Engineers.

Thank you.



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cc Honorable George Miller
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