

## **Rewarding Hard Work with Better Pay and Benefits**

### **Background:**

The incomes of working Americans have been stuck in place for too long, and keep falling further behind the cost of what families need to secure their piece of the American Dream. We need to make sure that hard work is rewarded with better pay and benefits that help American families take care of themselves and get ahead.

Working families headed by members of the “sandwich generation” are being increasingly squeezed by the costs of raising young children and caring for aging parents. In fact, 47% of Americans in their 40’s and 50’s are raising a child and helping to provide care for a parent over 65 years old. The cost of childcare is staggering – in Virginia alone the average annual cost is \$21,476 (more than 12% of median income). And some surveys indicate that adult children caring for an aging parent provide over \$5,000 per year for out of pocket care.

Part of the problem is that the basic compact between large employers and their workers has broken down, with workers receiving less and less of their fair share of their successes. Between 2000 and 2015, the share of corporate income that went to workers’ wages declined by 6.8%, meaning that American workers lost out on \$535 billion (or \$3,770 per worker).

**Therefore, be it resolved that** the 2017 Eighth Congressional District Democratic Convention:

1. Urges action in Congress to establish a national paid family and medical leave policy that guarantees at least 12 weeks of compensated leave to care for new children or deal with family medical emergencies.
2. Urges action in Congress and the Commonwealth of Virginia to incentivize businesses to adopt profit sharing systems such as employee stock ownership plans to ensure workers receive a fair share of the large employer success.
3. Recommends that Virginia explore ways to provide options and incentives to individuals and employers to voluntarily offer increased pay and benefits in these areas.