

ROCKEFELLER FAMILY FUND
MULTI-STATE WORKING FAMILIES COALITION
MOMSRISING.ORG

For Immediate Release: Thursday, Nov. 13, 2008

Contact: Patricia Charles, (301) 887-1060 x111, patricia@kelleycampaigns.com

Election poll finds work and family issues—amid economic worries—are a frequent daily concern for majority of America’s voting parents

Washington D.C., Nov. 13, 2008—A new poll taken as Americans went to vote last week finds that parents put balancing work and family on a par with the economic downturn as the sources of their greatest day-to-day worries.

The poll also found that 63 percent of registered voters—whether they were parents or not—were more likely to support a candidate they thought would help parents balance work and family with policies such as fair pay, healthcare and paid sick time.

“Voters, especially women, were looking for a leader who cared about the issues that affect families, including balancing work and family,” said Celinda Lake, President of Lake Research Partners. Her firm reached 1,200 likely voters from Nov. 2-4 on both land lines and cell phones on behalf of Rockefeller Family Fund, which commissioned the poll. A representative sample of voters responded: 53% women and 47% men, with 53% who said they were voting for Obama, 45% for McCain, and 1% for Nader.

Daily worries about work and family responsibilities proved to be frequent for 72 percent of working fathers and 67 percent of working mothers with children under 18. In comparison, 73 percent of working fathers and 74 percent of working mothers worried on a daily basis about the economy.

“Nearly three quarters of America’s working fathers worry on a daily basis about meeting their work and family responsibilities,” said Lisa Guide, Associate Director of the Rockefeller Family Fund, which commissioned the poll. “This poll clearly shows that work and family balance is not just a concern for American working women, but one of the biggest daily problems for America’s working families in general.”

“It’s not surprising that American parents are as worried about balancing work and family as they are about the economy, because in many ways these concerns are one and the same,” commented Ellen Bravo, Coordinator of the Multi-State Working Families Consortium. “Bad economic times are the worst time to lose your job because you have a sick child or your father had a stroke.”

“The poll results show that voters responded to the candidate who put economic security issues like paid sick days and family leave, early learning and childcare, and fair pay up front in his agenda,” said MomsRising.org Executive Director Kristin Rowe Finkbeiner. “Three quarters of all mothers are now in the workforce, and it’s time that we work towards solutions to the work/family problems that have long been swept aside as an epidemic of personal failings.”

As a candidate, Barack Obama's plan included expanding the Family Medical Leave Act and supporting a new labor standard of paid sick days. Advocates say these solutions would save companies money and allow working parents the opportunity to stay home from work when they are sick, or when a child needs to be taken to the doctor. Obama's platform for families is described at <http://www.barackobama.com/issues/family/>.

The complete poll, including crosstabs for responses by various demographic groups, is available at www.kelleycampaigns.com/lakepoll.html.

The following experts are available to speak about the poll, its implications for the new administration, and what this shift in priorities means for working mothers and families from all walks of life:

- Lisa Guide, associate director of Rockefeller Family Fund
- Celinda Lake, president of Lake Research Partners
- Ellen Bravo, coordinator of the Multi-State Working Families Consortium
- Kristin Rowe-Finkbeiner, executive director and co-founder of MomsRising.org

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Lake Research Partners is a national public opinion and political strategy research firm. The firm's principals are among the Democratic Party's leading strategists, serving as tacticians and senior advisors to dozens of incumbents and challengers at all levels of the electoral process, as well as to a wide range of advocacy organizations, non-profit organizations, and foundations. They have nationally recognized expertise on the politics of the women's vote, the youth vote, children as a political issue, and the environmental movement today.

The Rockefeller Family Fund has worked for over 40 years at the cutting edge of advocacy in such areas as advancing the economic rights of women, environmental protection, and helping citizens hold public and private institutions accountable for their actions. The Fund is best known for its creative and leveraged grantmaking, its role as a catalyst in the nonprofit as well as the funding communities, and its record of public policy innovation.

The Multi-State Working Families Consortium is made up of labor-community coalitions in 11 states and national policy and data experts, collaboratively advocating for policies that provide paid time to care.

MomsRising.org is an online grassroots organization with more than 150,000 members that works for paid family leave, flexible work options, excellent childcare and health care for all children, and to stop the wage and hiring biases that penalize so many mothers today.