



**AWARENESS OF CALIFORNIA'S PAID FAMILY LEAVE PROGRAM REMAINS LIMITED,  
ESPECIALLY AMONG THOSE WHO WOULD BENEFIT FROM IT MOST**

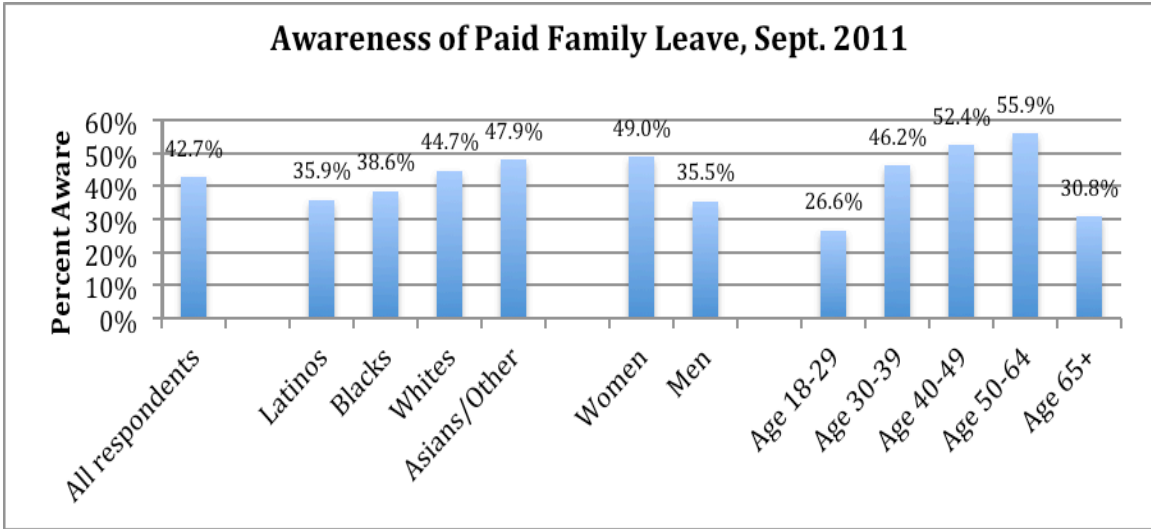
**New Results from the September 2011 Field Poll**

Dr. Eileen Appelbaum  
Senior Economist  
Center for Economic and Policy Research  
Washington, D.C. 20009  
appelbaum@cepr.net

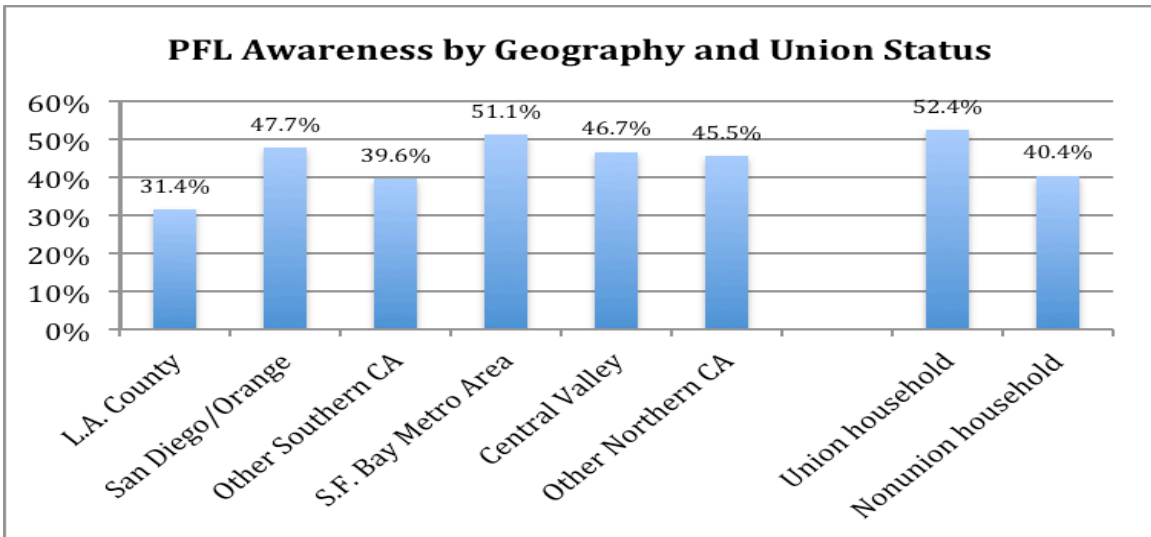
Dr. Ruth Milkman  
Professor of Sociology, Graduate Center  
Academic Director, Murphy Institute  
City University of New York  
rmilkman@gc.cuny.edu

As part of a study of paid family leave by Ruth Milkman and Eileen Appelbaum, the California Field Poll surveyed registered voters in California in September 2011 to assess their awareness of the state's Paid Family Leave (PFL) program. The poll included 1001 registered voters and was conducted from September 1-12, 2011.

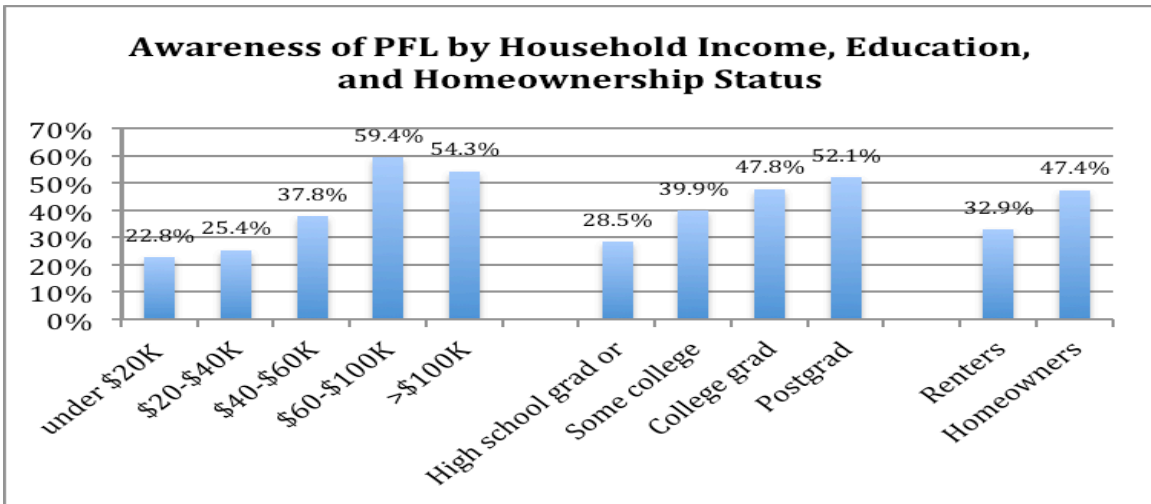
**Overall, well under half (42.7%) of respondents had “seen, read or heard” of the PFL program,** which was created by a 2002 law. Awareness varied by ethnicity, gender and age.



Awareness also varied geographically, with the highest level in the San Francisco Bay Area and the lowest in Los Angeles County. Respondents whose households included a union member were substantially more aware of PFL than those in non-union households.



Awareness was substantially lower among key disadvantaged groups: those with lower household incomes, limited education and renters (as opposed to homeowners).



Among those respondents who had heard of the program, 22.3% were **not** aware that it could be used not only for bonding with a new child, but also to care for a seriously ill family member. Here there was no significant demographic variation.

**Awareness of PFL has grown slowly over time.** The Field Poll methodology is slightly different from that of earlier surveys of PFL that we have conducted, but a systematic comparison to results of our 2003 survey show that awareness has increased by about 50% over the past eight years. Here the comparison is limited to respondents who voted in the last general election (the 2008 election for the 2011 poll, and the 2000 election for the 2003 survey).

Since 2003, awareness has grown substantially. Although fewer than half of these voters - 44.9% were aware of PFL in 2011, this is a dramatic increase over 2003, when the figure was 29.7%. Awareness has grown even more among female voters, from 25.9% to 51.2%. For men, there was very little change. Awareness nearly doubled among Latinos and Asians who voted in the 2008 election (of course, immigrant noncitizens are not part of this group).

PFL Awareness Among Respondents Who Voted in the Previous General Election, 2003 and 2011.

Percent Aware of PFL	2003	2011
All Respondents	29.7%	44.9%
Women	25.9%	51.2%
Men	34.3%	37.7%
Latinos	22.0%	40.8%
Blacks	35.3%	38.0%
Whites	30.9%	45.7%
Asians/Other	24.9%	49.3%

The Field Poll also asked respondents if they had ever collected benefits from the state's PFL program. Contrary to some predictions before the program was created, only 10.9% of all PFL-aware respondents to the Field Poll (whether or not they had voted in 2008) had used the program. This means that only 4.7% of all respondents to the Field Poll had done so.

Among PFL-aware respondents, 13.5% of females, but only 6.9% of males, had collected PFL benefits at some point in the program's seven years of operation.