

STATEMENT: CAP Experts Boushey and O'Leary on Investments in Middle Class

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"Today's announcement by President Barack Obama and Vice President Joe Biden of key investments in the middle class signals a recognition of the profound transformation in the American workforce and the American family. As the Center for American Progress first highlighted in "The Shriver Report: A Woman's Nation Changes Everything," and as the administration highlights today, two-thirds of families with children are headed by two working parents or a single working parent. Our economic policies must be responsive to this reality. The president's announcement of a major new investment in childcare for America's working families and a down payment in helping families support aging relatives is a critical first step toward job stability for the millions of American workers who are one step away from losing their job due to breakdowns in family care arrangements.

"But, this is only a first step. To fully address the very real middle-class anxieties around the day-to-day challenges of managing the dual responsibilities of work and family, workers need access to a variety of labor protections and on-the-job benefits. Individual workers and families have been bearing the full responsibility of managing work-family conflict, which cannot continue. The government is doing the right thing by addressing care issues, but employers should also recognize that these policies are good for their employees as well as good for business and should be a part of the solution. Workplace flexibility, paid family leave, and paid sick days are the next key steps that we look forward to working with this administration to move forward."

[Heather Boushey](#) is a Senior Economist at the Center for American Progress. [Ann O'Leary](#) is a Senior Fellow at American Progress and is the executive director of the Berkeley Center for Health, Economic & Family Security, or CHEFS, located at University of California-Berkeley School of Law.