

January 23, 2023

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
United States Senate
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
United States Senate
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker McCarthy and Leaders Jeffries, Schumer, and McConnell:

On behalf of The ERISA Industry Committee (ERIC) and our large employer member companies, we look forward to working with the 118th Congress on policies that can improve the health care, retirement, compensation, and paid leave benefits our members provide to tens of millions of American workers, retirees, and their families.

ERIC is a national nonprofit organization exclusively representing the largest employers in the United States in their capacity as sponsors of employee benefit plans for their nationwide workforces. With member companies that are leaders in every economic sector, ERIC is the voice of large employer plan sponsors on federal, state, and local public policies impacting their ability to sponsor benefit plans and to lawfully operate under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act's protection from a patchwork of different and conflicting state and local laws, in addition to federal law.

ERIC and our member companies are proud to have worked with the 117th Congress to accomplish several critical objectives, including:

- Extending 1st-dollar coverage of telehealth in high-deductible health plans until December 31, 2024
- Expanding and improving mental health programs through the passage of the *Restoring Hope for Mental Health and Wellbeing Act*
- Enhancing retirement policy with inclusion of the *SECURE 2.0 Act* in the *Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023*

Now, we are eager to engage with you and the 118th Congress to continue advancing legislative solutions that will promote the wellbeing of American workers, retirees, and their families. ERIC welcomes the opportunity to discuss our [policy priorities](#), which are focused on improving employee health and financial security, increasing flexibility and opportunity, reducing costs and administrative burdens, and helping large employers continue to deliver uniform, national benefits programs related to health care, retirement, paid leave, and compensation.

Tax Treatment and ERISA Preemption

ERIC supports measures that ensure continued tax preferences for employer-sponsored benefits and exclusive federal regulation of nationwide benefits plans. Large employers operating in multiple states need the consistency and certainty provided by ERISA to ensure that they can offer uniform, national benefits to their workforce. ERIC works to preserve ERISA preemption and defend plan sponsors' ability to design benefits that drive value. And we oppose any state attempt to erode ERISA's national uniformity for federally regulated plans.

Health Care

ERIC's work on health policy is focused on promoting affordable, high-value coverage for employees by promoting transparency and competition, building and improving markets to lower costs and improve quality, reforming the payment system to incentivize value, and improving flexibility for employers to innovate and design the best health coverage for their beneficiaries. We hope to work with Congress on these policy areas as well as improving benefits for high deductible health plan beneficiaries, and improving patient safety throughout the health care system.

Retirement and Compensation

Large plan sponsors invest in their employees and their financial wellness, including retirement security. Sometimes, federal rules get in the way of the flexibility that creative employers need to offer helpful options to their workers. We hope the 118th Congress will build on the bipartisan *SECURE 2.0 Act* by enacting additional policies that maintain the voluntary, employer-provided system, and expanding retirement savings opportunities without imposing costly and ineffective administrative burdens. Additionally, large employers recognize the importance of paid leave, and voluntarily provide generous leave benefits to their workers. Unfortunately, conflicting and counterproductive administrative requirements have been imposed by individual states and localities, making these benefits more expensive without enhancing worker benefits. Any changes to paid leave policy ought to address this costly patchwork.

Conclusion

Employers are working diligently to provide robust employee benefits to their workforce. These benefits help support workers and their families to be safe, healthy, and financially secure in retirement. We look forward to working with you to support these important goals, and to serving as a resource during the 118th Congress.

Sincerely,



CC: Members of Congress