

The Work-Life Balance and Flex Holiday Act of 2026 — A National Demand for Dignity

We're done being worked to the bone. America's workers have fewer guaranteed paid holidays than almost every other rich country, and the consequences are real: burnout, stress, illness, broken families, and crushing economic instability.

The **Work-Life Balance and Flex Holiday Act of 2026** is a simple, fair, and long-overdue solution:

- Guarantee every worker 9 paid rest days per year, scheduled every six weeks to create a regular 3-day weekend for everyone.
- Guarantee 5 additional paid days off employees can choose freely for religious, cultural, family, or personal needs — no questions asked.

This is not a handout. It's basic human dignity and a public health necessity. The rest of the developed world figured this out years ago. It's time we catch up.

1. Overview

The Work-Life Balance and Flex Holiday Act of 2026 is a common-sense proposal to address the widespread burnout, stress, and lack of rest that American workers face. The U.S. has fewer guaranteed paid holidays than nearly every other developed country, with deadly consequences—higher rates of depression, heart disease, family breakdown, and economic instability.

This Act guarantees 9 paid rest days per year, spaced every six weeks to create regular 3-day weekends for predictability and fairness. It also provides 5 floating paid days off workers can use for religious holidays, family obligations, mental health, or personal reasons—no corporate gatekeeping.

It's about fairness, health, and human dignity. We don't need to work ourselves to death. We need to live, rest, and thrive.

2. The Bill Text

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Work-Life Balance and Flex Holiday Act of 2026.”

SEC. 2. GUARANTEED NATIONAL PAID REST DAYS.

- (a) Employers shall provide all employees with 9 paid rest days per calendar year.
- (b) These days shall be nationally scheduled to provide a 3-day weekend every 6 weeks.
- (c) Paid rest days shall be compensated at the employee’s normal rate of pay.

SEC. 3. EMPLOYEE-SELECTED FLOATING PAID TIME OFF.

- (a) Employers shall provide 5 paid leave days per year to be used by employees at their discretion.
- (b) Leave may be used for religious, cultural, family, or personal reasons.
- (c) Employers may not unreasonably deny such leave requests.

SEC. 4. ENFORCEMENT.

- (a) The Department of Labor shall oversee enforcement and implement regulations.
- (b) Workers may file complaints in cases of non-compliance.

SEC. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act shall take effect on January 1 of the first calendar year following passage.

3. References

OECD. (2023). *Employment Outlook 2023*. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. <https://www.oecd.org/employment-outlook/>

Virtanen, M., Jokela, M., Madsen, I. E. H., Magnusson Hanson, L. L., Lallukka, T., Nyberg, S. T., ... & Kivimäki, M. (2018). Long working hours and depressive symptoms: Systematic review and meta-analysis. *Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment & Health*, 44(3), 239–250. <https://doi.org/10.5271/sjweh.3712>