



# TAKE BACK YOUR TIME DAY

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## LABOR DAY PRESS RELEASE

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## TAKE BACK YOUR TIME DAY CAMPAIGN ENCOURAGES PASSAGE OF SENATE RESOLUTION 210.

**Seattle, WA--** Labor Day is fast approaching, and the way things are heading in the United States, it may soon be one of the few days off work that Americans have. Overwork leaves fewer and fewer Americans with enough time for their families and other responsibilities. This summer, only about half of all Americans took a full week's vacation. The number of families eating dinner together has dropped by a third since 1970.

"It's time for a new national dialogue about work and family balance," says Gretchen Burger, lead organizer of Take Back Your Time Day ([www.timeday.org](http://www.timeday.org)), a non-partisan educational initiative planned for October 24, 2003. "That's why we started the Take Back Your Time Day campaign and that's why we wholeheartedly support Senate Resolution 210."

The resolution, authored by Senators Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) and Edward Kennedy (D-Massachusetts) calls upon President Bush to proclaim October as "National Work and Family Month" and make "reducing the conflict between work and family a national priority." The resolution comes up for a vote in early September. "We urge all Americans to send messages to their senators encouraging them to support the resolution," says Burger.

"The time to address this issue is now," adds John de Graaf, National Coordinator for Take Back Your Time Day, and editor of the new book, *Take Back Your Time*, just released by Berrett-Koehler Publishers. "Americans are reaching a breaking point as far as overwork is concerned." A new poll, commissioned by the non-profit Center for a New American Dream ([www.newdream.org](http://www.newdream.org)), supports de Graaf's conclusions.

The poll finds that 60% of Americans "feel pressure to work too much," and 83% wish they had more time to spend with their families. More than half would trade some pay for more free time. 75% of those polled say they "think that Americans are too focused on work and spending." The poll was conducted by Widmeyer Research and Polling of Washington, D.C., and has a margin of error of 4.4%.

To address the issue, the Take Back Your Time Day campaign is promoting local teach-ins on college campuses and educational events and activities throughout the country for October 24<sup>th</sup>. Take Back Your Time Day has won endorsements from labor unions, religious and family organizations (endorsers are listed on the Web site: [www.timeday.org](http://www.timeday.org)), and thousands of Americans are expected to take part in the event. The campaign recently won the endorsement of Tom and Ray Magliozzi of NPR's Car Talk program (<http://cartalk.cars.com/features/slack>).

Take Back Your Time Day is set for October 24<sup>th</sup> because the date falls nine weeks before the end of the year, symbolizing the nine weeks—350 hours—more each year that Americans work compared to western Europeans. “Even medieval peasants worked less than we do,” says Take Back Your Time Day’s John de Graaf.

“Take Back Your Time Day ought to get us thinking about catching up to the Europeans, with minimum paid vacations, a shorter work week and better pay for low-income workers who work two jobs just to make ends meet,” says Tom Turnipseed, a South Carolina attorney and member of the Time Day steering committee. “If we really want a strong America, that’s a place to start.”

*Take Back Your Time Day is a project of the Center for Religion, Ethics and Social Policy at Cornell University and the first national initiative of the Simplicity Forum.*

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