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[Allison Stevens](#)

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Combing Through Palin's Caregiving Record

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Check out my entry on [Broad Bytes](#), the new blog at [Women's eNews](#):

Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin strode on to the national stage in Minneapolis earlier this month as the legendary Superwoman of the 1980s, a put-together career mother who combines work and family responsibilities with ease.

Running the state of Alaska -- and now running for vice president -- while caring for five children, including an infant son with Down Syndrome, is certainly a tough task, but she manages to make it look as easy as Wonder Woman bending a steel pipe.

Amazed onlookers have asked how Palin does it all, but advocates for working women are asking a different question: How will she help other women do it all -- other women who do not have the benefit of six-figure salaries, jobs with flexible schedules or husbands willing to take time out of their careers to raise babies?

Moms Rising, a grassroots organization of mothers lobbying for better work-life balance policies, has turned the question into a formal petition that it plans to deliver to Palin's office in Washington, D.C., on Wednesday. More than 20,000 people have signed on to it.

"Dear Governor Palin," it starts. "It was dazzling to see a mom on the stage at the Republican convention accepting the vice presidential nomination. There are too few mothers in the boardrooms and high levels of political office."

It goes on to state that Palin has neglected to discuss how she would help mothers balance work and caregiving responsibilities, especially during economic crises like the current one. With less wealth than men, women are more vulnerable to economic trouble.

Since she was offered the No. 2 slot on the GOP ticket, Palin has not publicly discussed her position on proposals that would help employees obtain paid leave to take care of newborn children and sick relatives, help women narrow the wage gap and help

parents bargain for more flexible work schedules.

Advocates for working mothers have been digging through Palin's record during her tenure as governor of Alaska and mayor of Wasilla and have found little that would indicate her positions on these issues. It's a silence Kristin Rowe-Finkbeiner, the executive director of MomsRising, says speaks volumes.

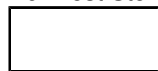
"She's obviously not a strong supporter" of initiatives that would help fellow working mothers balance their responsibilities "because we are all looking and not finding a lot of data," she said. "That in and of itself is a statement about her record."

Allison Stevens is Washington Bureau Chief of [Women's eNews](#).

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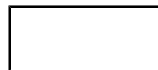
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And, as a single, full-time working Mom of a developmentally challenged son, I, too, can say that I SERIOUSLY DOUBT she will have much for us either. This whole 2008 election is just seriously sad...makes me sick.

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Thank you. Finally good to hear about a woman's group that is seriously and loudly taking Sarah Palin on for trying to pull the wool over the eyes of working women. Her record has been under assault by a rising, diverse chorus of female voices.

These voices are criticizing Gov. Sarah Palin for cutting funding for teen mothers, cutting funding for WIC (women, infants, children) recipients, signing off on documents (as Mayor of Wasila) that authorized her city to charge rape victims for rape kits, for presiding over Alaska's piss poor parental leave policy that Palin has had every opportunity to rectify, for ONLY working a total of 85 days in the last 20 months as Governor of Alaska (as of today), for believing that abortion be criminalized and for opposing abortion in cases of rape and incest, for staying silent on whether she supports the Bush-McCain endeavor to get rid of the "TITLE IV Affirmative Action Program" that that mostly benefits white women and helped her get a scholarship to college, and, for joining her mentors George Bush and John McCain in opposing the EQUAL PAY for EQUAL WORK legislation that would empower the very working mothers she claims she represents.

Gov. Palin is not a champion of working women's issues anymore than John McCain has been a champion of veterans' issues.

Great to see more and more women concluding correctly that she does not represent the contemporary working women.

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