Testimony Concerning SB 225
"State Personnel - Employee Accommodations - Pregnancy and Childbirth"
Submitted to the Senate Finance Committee
February 13, 2020

Position: Support

Maryland Family Network (MFN) supports SB 225, which would require the State to provide reasonable accommodations for pregnant workers. Reasonable accommodations would have a relatively small impact on business but a long-term significant impact on the health of both the mother and her child.

MFN has worked since 1945 to improve the availability and quality of child care and early childhood education, as well as other supports for children and families in Maryland. We are strongly committed to ensuring that children, along with their parents, have access to work and educational opportunities that promote their health and well-being. MFN has, over time and in various ways, helped employers who seek to develop or expand family-friendly workplace policies.

During their working lives, nearly 85% of women will become mothers. Because new babies generally increase families' expenses, a women's wages can be especially important when they are pregnant. But when pregnant workers lose or forgo employment for lack of basic accommodations their family economic security suffers and they often struggle to re-enter the job market. This can present challenges and lead to negative consequences that affect both children and parents for an extended time.

Helping pregnant workers maintain healthy pregnancies by providing reasonable accommodations benefits not only workers and their families but also employers, and by extension the entire economy. Studies have consistently documented that employers who adopt family-friendly workplace policies reap the rewards of employee loyalty and are better able to attract and retain a productive workforce.

SB 225 would require the State to provide reasonable accommodations for pregnant workers. This is a sorely needed policy for Maryland's working families, and MFN respectfully urges the Committee's favorable consideration.