

Legislative Position: Opposed
House Bill 375
Labor and Employment – Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program – Establishment
(Time to Care Act of 2021)
House Economic Matters Committee

Tuesday, February 16, 2021

Dear Chairman Davis and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Washington County Chamber of Commerce, with 575 members representing over 40,000 employees, I am writing you to oppose House Bill 375, Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program – Establishment (Time to Care Act of 2021). Now is not the time to implement yet another costly employer mandate, as businesses struggle to overcome a global pandemic. I am very concerned that the implementation of this legislation will result in additional costs and administrative burden to employers, especially small businesses and non-profits, at a time when they can least afford it. In addition, the Fiscal Note for this legislation indicates an annual cost to Maryland taxpayers of over \$20 million, just to administer this program.

To say that COVID-19 has had a tremendous, detrimental impact on Maryland's economy would be an understatement. Maryland businesses continue to struggle to stay afloat, and the Comptroller's office has estimated that approximately 30,000 businesses have either closed or will close permanently. A period of major economic downturn and future uncertainty is not the time to implement new employer mandates that stand to negatively impact businesses that are struggling to overcome the impact of the pandemic.

Delegate Davis, I will again remind you that I was on the Maryland Chamber of Commerce's "Meet the State" call with you on January 19th. Again, I was pleased to hear you say, and I am paraphrasing, "I am committed to listening to the business community when it comes to this year's legislation. 'We' need to listen to you." Well, I am respectfully asking you to continue to "listen to the business community." Please hear us and seriously consider our concerns when it comes to HB 375.

On behalf of the business and non-profit members of the Washington County Chamber of Commerce, we respectfully request an **UNFAVORABLE REPORT** on HB 375.

Sincerely,



Paul Frey, IOM
President and CEO