

Dear Committee Chair C.T. Wilson, and members of the Economic Matter Committee:

I am writing to you in support of SB275 - The Time to Care Act, which would establish a paid family leave insurance program. I became an entrepreneur not only for personal gain, but to provide a great work environment for people. I was raised to value everyone, treat people with decency, and be empathetic. My years in business have taught me just how crucial staff is to the viability of a business. My restaurant, Medium Rare is at its best when my team does well collectively and individually. I have also learned that having to replace a team member on a permanent basis is one of the costliest expenditures a small business can face. Allowing a member of my team the opportunity to take time off to take care of a sick child or spend time with their newborn is not only good for the individual, but it also provides stability within my business, and society. The numerous stories and data that have been presented to me displays the positive impact that a paid family leave insurance program will have on Marylanders.

The Time to Care Act will help address the economic hardship, stress, and other burdens that come into play when caring for new babies, loved ones with serious health conditions, or yourself. Employees' ability to take up to 12 weeks of paid leave will help Maryland families meet their caregiving, employment, and financial needs and commitments while caring for their family.

An OpinionWorks study conducted from December 11-26, 2020, showed overwhelming support that crosses all partisan and geographic lines for paid family leave in Maryland. Results showed 88% of Maryland voters specifically favor creation of "a family and medical leave insurance program that would provide workers with partial wage replacement for up to 12 weeks when they need time away from work to care for a new child, seriously ill family member, or their own serious health condition."

No Marylander should have to choose between the job they need and the family they love. Every Marylander deserves a secure and prosperous life for themselves and their families, and paid family leave will get us one step closer.

Thank you,

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