



Testimony in Support of SB 275 – Labor and Employment – Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program – Establishment (Time to Care Act of 2022)

Senate Finance Committee
February 10, 2022

To: Chair Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman, and members of the Finance Committee:

From: Larry Ottinger

My name is Larry Ottinger. I am a resident of District 18. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB 275, the Time to Care Act of 2022, which would establish a paid family and medical leave insurance program.

Launched in 2017, Our Maryland is a nonprofit, multi-issue communications hub for promoting a just and sustainable future for all Marylanders. Our Maryland currently has close to 55,000 Facebook followers and 14,000 email subscribers. Our followers and subscribers from across the state affirm the importance of and broad support for the Time to Care Act now.

An OpinionWorks study conducted from December 15, 2021- January 10, 2022, showed overwhelming support for paid family leave in Maryland that crosses all partisan and geographic lines. 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.”

Now is the time for the legislature to finally join other states and the District of Columbia in ensuring that no Marylander has to choose between the job they need and the family they love. With the spike last month in hospitalizations and deaths and the failure of Congress to enact any paid leave nationally, the need to act and lead now could not be clearer.

A true paid family and medical leave policy must be cost-effective for workers, employers, and the government with employers contributing at least as much as employees. It must cover all working people, apply equally to everyone, cover all the well-established reasons people need leave, reflect an inclusive definition of family, and provide up to 12 weeks of leave and job security. SB 275 has all of these key components of a meaningful paid family and medical leave program. I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB 275.

*Larry Ottinger, President
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