



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Marc Elrich
County Executive

February 10, 2022

TO: The Honorable Delores G. Kelley
Chair, Finance Committee

FROM: Marc Elrich
County Executive

RE: Senate Bill 275 – *Labor and Employment – Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program – Establishment (Time to Care Act of 2022)* – Support

I am writing to express my strong support for **Senate Bill 275 – Labor and Employment - Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program - Establishment (Time to Care Act of 2022)**, which establishes a much needed and long-awaited insurance program to provide up to 12 weeks of wage replacement to workers who need to take temporary leave to: (1) deal with a serious health condition; (2) care for a child during the first year after the child's birth or after the placement of a child through foster care, kinship care, or adoption; (3) care for a family member with a serious health condition; or (4) care for a family member who is an active or former member of the United States military on the verge of deployment or dealing with other qualifying exigencies relating to military service.

Maryland's workforce needs access to this kind of insurance so that workers have the flexibility that is required to address their health challenges and family responsibilities while remaining in the labor force and sustaining our economy. The United States is one of the few industrialized countries that does not offer family and medical leave insurance. In the absence of an adequate federal program, it is time for Maryland to step forward and proactively address this challenge.

In addition to the crossfile of this bill, **House Bill 8 – Labor and Employment - Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program - Establishment (Time to Care Act of 2022)**, a second bill that would also establish a Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program, **House Bill 496 – Labor and Employment - Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program - Establishment**, has also been filed in the House of Delegates. I am supportive of both bills in concept and encourage the Finance Committee to carefully evaluate the differences between the two bills so that it can develop a final product that provides meaningful benefits to as many Marylanders as possible.

I respectfully request that the Committee move forward in adopting legislation that creates a Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program that helps to relieve the financial burden of taking time off to address health care needs and family responsibilities, particularly for low-income families.

cc: Members of the Finance Committee