

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

FAVORABLE

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

FROM: Leigh Vinocur MD MS FACEP

I’m Dr. Vinocur, I am an emergency physician from Owings Mills, MD
I’m here to support the Time to Care Act because it will make a significant difference for the health and well-being of my patients and all Marylanders.

When a patient is sick or injured, I sometimes recommend that they stay home to fully recover.

Some illnesses and injuries require days or even weeks of recovery – more than what their paid sick leave allows.

For many patients, it’s best for them to have a family member in the home to best follow our medical advice and course of treatment.

And, of course, when a patient welcomes a new child into their family, we encourage them to be able to take time to bond with their baby, which has countless physical and emotional benefits to both.

But too many Marylanders don’t have the leave they need to take care of themselves or to care for their loved ones or new babies.

Too many of my patients have to quit their job or spend what little savings they have to get a little more time with their baby or to care for a sick family member.

Unfortunately, without income or a job, these patients can face additional obstacles to good health moving forward, such as fresh groceries or needed prescriptions.

The lack of paid family and medical leave is leaving Marylanders less healthy and worse off.

You have an opportunity to change this.

By establishing a paid family and medical leave insurance program, SB 275 can give Maryland families the freedom to care for themselves and each other without depleting their bank accounts or going into debt.

We've learned that all workers are essential, and under the Time to Care Act, all workers would be able to recover from sickness or injury, or childbirth, without having to lose their jobs.

I hope that you'll pass SB 275 without delay to help my patients and all Maryland families gain paid family and medical leave.