



6240 Old Dobbin Lane ■ Suite 110 ■ Columbia, MD 21045

March 28, 2023

Hon. C. T. Wilson
Chair, House Economic Matters Committee
231 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401
ct.wilson@house.state.md.us

Re: **SB 0828** – Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program – Modifications
Position: **Oppose Unless Amended**

Dear Chair Wilson:

The Howard County Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) is a business organization dedicated to economic, business, and community development in Howard County and the Central Maryland region. In advancing our mission, we advocate for policies that lead to job creation and investment.

The Howard County Chamber is concerned that the timeline for Senate Bill 828 calls for implementation too fast and thereby unworkable. The program as proposed is unnecessarily complicated. We support simplifying the program and following best practices from other states, which have programs that often more closely mirror the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). For example, FMLA requires the employer to be notified by the employee before filing an application for family and medical leave.

Employers should have the right to decide if their employees should exhaust their employer sponsored leave concurrently with the 12-week paid leave benefit, The new language in SB 828 precludes this and only allows for an employee option to take the leave concurrently. Additionally, the current language is confusing and is likely to cause overpayments and the need for reconciliation to employees.

The committee should reinstate the 1% total contribution cap which existed in a previous version of the legislation. In addition, the employer should not pay more than 25% of the cost for the program, which the Department of Labor study indicated would provide be optimum result.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Leonardo McClarty'.

Leonardo McClarty, CCE
President, Howard County Chamber