



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

AFFILIATED WITH NATIONAL AFL-CIO

7 School Street • Annapolis, Maryland 21401-2096

Balto. (410) 269-1940 • Fax (410) 280-2956

President

Donna S. Edwards

Secretary-Treasurer

Gerald W. Jackson

**HB 1015 - Labor and Employment - Maryland Healthy Working Families Act - Seasonal
Temporary Workers
House Economic Matters Committee
March 7, 2023**

OPPOSE

Donna S. Edwards

President

Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO

Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong opposition to HB 1015. My name is Donna S. Edwards, and I am the President of the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO. On behalf of Maryland's 300,000 union members, I offer the following comments.

Sick and safe leave were put into place because Maryland recognized that a healthy workforce benefits all of us. The State knew that guaranteeing all workers had at least some sick leave promoted social equity. HB 1015 effectively ends the ability of certain workers to accrue and use sick leave as the program intended. This bill leaves behind some of the very same workers that our state previously fought to include.

When Maryland passed the Healthy Working Families Act, provisions were already put in place to accommodate seasonal employers. By changing the rules to prohibit workers from using sick and safe leave during the first 120 days of employment, it effectively eliminates seasonal workers from ever having the right to use sick leave. The bill additionally prohibits workers from carrying over their leave if they are rehired the following year. If a worker is hired by the same employer every summer, this bill would force them to restart the clock each year, never reaching eligibility to use benefits that the State of Maryland gave them.

Sick and safe leave prevents workers from being forced to come to work sick, spreading infections to customers and coworkers. This is not just an issue of worker's rights but public health. We urge this committee to issue an unfavorable report for HB 1015 and protect the rights of all workers, including seasonal employees.