



SB 828
Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program Modifications

Economic Matters Committee

March 30, 2023

Support

Catholic Charities of Baltimore supports SB 828 which would clarify aspects of the Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FMLI) program.

Inspired by the Gospel to love, serve and teach, Catholic Charities provides care and services to improve the lives of Marylanders in need. For 100 years, Catholic Charities has accompanied Marylanders as they age with dignity, obtain empowering careers, heal from trauma and addiction, achieve economic independence, prepare for educational success and feel welcome as immigrant neighbors. We recognize the strong public interest in providing all employees with the opportunity to receive wage replacement when they take time to care for themselves or a family member.

Last year, the General Assembly passed the Time to Care Act which established the parameters for the FMLI program. It was an historic step toward providing workers with the flexibility they need to balance work and health. After the passage of the bill, we continued to meet with stakeholders to discuss implementation of the bill. Through those discussions we identified areas of the bill that required adjustment and clarification. Additionally, we knew that there were some issues that were left unresolved in the original legislation. The bill addresses those concerns.

The Senate made a number of amendments to the bill to improve the implementation process. These include:

- Extending the implementation timeline by one year. Under the new timeline, the contribution rate will be set on October 1, 2023, contributions will begin on October 1, 2024 and benefits will begin on January 1, 2026.
- Replacing the definition of wages.
- Striking language that altered what constitutes a serious health condition from the 2022 version of the bill.
- Adding a contribution cap of 1.2% of payroll up to the social security cap.
- Clarify the process for the paying the employer portion for Medicaid providers.
- Clarifies the overlap of FMLA and FMLI leave.

With the passage of last year's Time to Care Act, all eyes turned to Maryland. Now it is time to implement the program. SB 828 with the Senate amendments will set us on the path for a smooth implementation.

For the reasons listed above, Catholic Charities of Baltimore appreciates your consideration, and urges the committee to issue a favorable report for SB 828 as passed by the Senate.

Submitted By: Regan Vaughan, Director of Advocacy