



# MARYLAND COMMISSION ON CAREGIVING

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March 2, 2023

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The Honorable Melony Griffith  
Chair, Senate Finance Committee  
3 East, Miller Senate Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

### **RE: SB 828- Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program - Modifications**

Dear Chairwoman Griffith:

The Maryland Commission on Caregiving is pleased to submit this **letter of support for SB 828- Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program - Modifications**. This modifies the Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI) Program by specifying various aspects of programmatic implementation, administration, and the cost-sharing split. The Maryland Commission on Caregiving also supports the sponsor amendments, which make the cost-sharing split 50-50 between employers and employees, putting SB 828 in the same posture as the House Bill.

Passing the Time to Care Act of 2022 last legislative session was a historic victory for all Marylanders - and it was just the first step in realizing Paid Family and Medical Leave in Maryland. The critical work to create and implement an accessible, equitable, and robust FAMLI program is the next major step in fulfilling the promise of the Time to Care Act of 2022, and the General Assembly still has a key role to play in this collective effort. Passing SB 828 with the sponsor amendments will set important parameters for the FAMLI program, putting the program firmly on the path toward successful implementation.

Serving as the ‘voice of the Maryland family caregiver,’ the Maryland Commission on Caregiving (“Commission”) is charged with recommending policies that positively impact family caregivers, soliciting and responding to their concerns and acknowledging their contributions. A new study by the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers finds that one in five full-time workers cares for a family member with a serious illness or disability. Nearly 20 percent of them said they had to quit a job to care for a relative and 40 percent said they had to go to part-time work. Three-quarters said they have had to leave work early to care for a loved one, 70 percent took time off and 60 percent had to take two or more days off.<sup>1</sup> The loss of wages caregivers experience are estimated to be a staggering \$522 billion every year.<sup>2</sup>

FAMLI programs foster opportunities for families to care for aging loved ones, and as a result, studies show declines in nursing home utilization rates in states that have FAMLI programs.<sup>3</sup> When older adults are able to age in place, it creates stronger communities for all Marylanders.

Implementing Maryland’s FAMLI program with a cost-sharing split of 50% employees, 50% employers is fundamentally important, as it keeps the program affordable and equitable for both employers and employees in Maryland. A 50/50 cost-

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.rosalynncarter.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/210140-RCI-National-Surveys-Executive-Summary-Update-9.22.21.pdf>

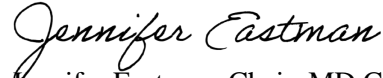
<sup>2</sup> [https://www.rand.org/pubs/external\\_publications/EP66196.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/external_publications/EP66196.html)

<sup>3</sup> Does Paid Family Leave Reduce Nursing Home Use? The California Experience <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/pam.22038>

sharing split is in line with most other states - including our neighboring state of Delaware - that have recently passed FAMILI programs.

The Commission works to ensure that caregivers across the lifespan are equipped with the resources needed to provide safe care to their loved ones. Passage of SB 828 would support such efforts which is why the Commission respectfully urges a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Eastman".

Jennifer Eastman, Chair, MD Commission on Caregiving