



Senate Bill 828 -- Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program - Modifications
Senate Finance Committee
March 2, 2023
Oppose

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC), the voice of business in Metro Maryland, opposes Senate Bill 828 -- *Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program - Modifications*.

While MCCC has had concerns about instituting another mandated employer requirement, we applaud the good intentions of the Maryland General Assembly for creating a family and medical leave insurance program. MCCC has a track record of supporting proposals that seek to enhance employee benefits. As an example, MCCC led an effort on the local level in Montgomery County to implement matching grants for childcare costs through dependent flexible spending accounts. We acknowledge that the marketplace for talent has grown more competitive and employers must offer a menu of enhanced benefits.

An area where MCCC has limited concern is the employer-employee contribution split. We fully understand that there will be further discussions on what the right percentage should be and for that reason MCCC is amenable to a 50% - 50% contribution if legislators conclude that is fundamentally fair.

There are, however, a few concerns MCCC has with Senate Bill 828. First, the currently proposed timeline for implementation of a family and medical leave insurance program in Maryland is too fast and thereby unworkable. The timeline for implementation should be extended significantly on behalf of employers who must institute and budget for the program.

MCCC is also concerned that 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, but Senate Bill 828 does not have that requirement.

Senate Bill 828 also allows more time than FMLA for an employee to file an application for benefits after the start of leave. The timeframe should mirror FMLA's, which requires that the application for benefits be filed as soon as practicable in the case of an unforeseen circumstance.

For these reasons, the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce opposes Senate Bill 828 and respectfully requests an unfavorable report.

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce, on behalf of our nearly 500 members, advocates for growth in business opportunities, strategic investment in infrastructure, and balanced tax reform to advance Metro Maryland as a regional, national, and global location for business success. Established in 1959, MCCC is an independent non-profit membership organization and a proud Montgomery County Green Certified Business.

Brian Levine | Vice President of Government Affairs
Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce
51 Monroe Street | Suite 1800
Rockville, Maryland 20850
301-738-0015 | www.mcccmd.com