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Finance Committee



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Friday, February 16, 2024

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 485: Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program - Modifications

Madam Chair and Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

I am writing to provide testimony on Senate Bill 485, which proposes modifications to the Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI) Program.

Senate Bill 485 seeks to refine the administration of the FAMLI Program by introducing adjustments to key administrative deadlines, definitions, and components. Notably, the bill proposes delaying the start dates for required contributions and benefit payments, extending them by nine months to July 1, 2025, and six months to July 1, 2026, respectively.

These modifications are imperative to ensure the effective implementation and sustainability of the FAMLI Program. By extending the deadlines, we allow for additional time for the department to fine-tune the program's infrastructure, address potential challenges, and provide necessary education and outreach to stakeholders.

Moreover, the bill empowers the Maryland Department of Labor (MDL) to adopt regulations establishing fees for private employer plans. This provision enhances the program's flexibility and financial viability, enabling private employers to participate in a manner that aligns with their organizational structure and resources.

The proposed changes align with the overarching goal of the FMLI Program: to support working families by providing them with essential leave benefits during critical life events. By implementing these modifications, we demonstrate our commitment to ensuring that every individual in the state of Maryland has access to the support and resources they need to care for themselves and their loved ones without sacrificing financial stability.

In conclusion, I urge the Committee to support Senate Bill 485 and its modifications to the Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program. These adjustments are integral to the program's success and will significantly benefit the residents of Maryland. Thank you for considering our testimony, and please do not hesitate to reach out if you require further information or clarification.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Antonio L. Hayes", is written in a cursive style.

Senator Antonio L. Hayes
40th Legislative District – MD