



To: Government, Labor and Elections Committee

From: Rebecca Snyder, Executive Director, Executive Alliance

Date: February 10, 2026

RE: Executive Alliance FAVORABLE – HB536

Executive Alliance focuses on creating opportunities for professional women in Maryland's boardrooms and executive leadership levels through education, advocacy and mentorship.

Executive Alliance supports HB536, which expands employment discrimination protections to include temporary disabilities caused or contributed to by childbirth, menopause, or related medical conditions.

Why This Matters for Professional Women

For professional women, workplace equity is not only about access to opportunity—it is about **the ability to sustain and advance a career across all life stages**. Temporary medical conditions related to childbirth and menopause are common, predictable, and often time-limited, yet they remain widely misunderstood and inconsistently accommodated in professional environments.

Without clear legal protections, many women experience:

- Pressure to work through medical symptoms that affect concentration, stamina, or health
- Lost opportunities for advancement due to short-term accommodations being viewed as inconvenience or weakness
- Unspoken penalties for requesting flexibility, medical leave, or temporary adjustments
- Decisions to step back from leadership tracks—or leave the workforce entirely—at pivotal moments in their careers

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We stand for women's leadership.

ADVOCACY • EDUCATION • MENTORSHIP

These experiences disproportionately affect women in mid-career and senior roles, precisely when organizations rely on their leadership, institutional knowledge, and mentorship of the next generation.

Childbirth and Menopause Are Workforce Issues

Childbirth and menopause are not rare or exceptional circumstances. They are **normal biological phases** that intersect with prime working years. Treating the temporary effects of these conditions as unprotected leaves too much room for bias—often subtle, but highly consequential.

Professional women do not seek special treatment. They seek:

- The ability to recover, adapt, and remain productive
- Assurance that requesting a short-term accommodation will not derail years of professional achievement
- Clear, consistent standards that protect both employees and employers

This bill provides that clarity.

Strengthening Maryland's Talent Pipeline

Maryland competes for top talent. Retaining experienced professional women is not just a fairness issue—it is an **economic imperative**.

By passing HB 536, Maryland can:

- Reduce attrition of highly skilled women during key life transitions
- Support leadership continuity and succession planning
- Signal that Maryland is a state where professionals can build long, sustainable careers

For employers, clear protections reduce uncertainty and foster healthier, more transparent workplace cultures. For employees, they provide confidence that medical realities will not be used—explicitly or implicitly—against them.

We urge a favorable report.