



TO: The Honorable Maggie McIntosh, Chair  
Members, House Appropriations Committee  
The Honorable Kriselda Valderrama

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer  
J. Steven Wise  
Danna L. Kauffman  
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DATE: February 11, 2020

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 523 – *State Personnel – Employee Accommodations – Pregnancy and Childbirth*

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On behalf of the Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MDAAP) and the Maryland Section of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (MDACOG), we submit this letter of **support** for House Bill 523.

House Bill 523 requires a unit of State government to provide reasonable workplace accommodations for an employee who is limited in their ability to perform their job due to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. Reasonable accommodations include changing the employee's job duties or work hours, relocating the employee's work area, providing mechanical or electrical aids, transferring the employee to a less strenuous or less hazardous position, or providing leave. The bill applies to all units in the Executive, Judicial, and Legislative branches of the State, including units with independent personnel systems.

The federal Pregnancy Discrimination Act makes it unlawful to discriminate on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related health conditions. While Maryland currently has protections in the law, they are framed as a disability which does not appropriately reflect the range of accommodations, which are often limited or short-term, that may be required during a pregnancy. For example, a pregnant woman may not be able to lift heavy objects, or should rest periodically, if she stands for a long period of time. These accommodations are critical for the health of the woman and to ensure healthy birth outcomes and also assist in protecting the financial stability of the woman and her family by enabling her, if possible, to continue gainful employment and return to the workplace postpartum.

House Bill 523 will make it unlawful to refuse an employee's request for reasonable accommodations during pregnancy, and prohibits a requirement to take leave if reasonable accommodations can be provided. The State is also provided certain protections in that an employee may be required to provide a certification from the employee's health care provider concerning the medical advisability of a reasonable accommodation. House Bill 523 will protect the health and financial stability of women during pregnancy by ensuring they can obtain reasonable accommodations in the workplace. A favorable report is requested.

**For more information call:**

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