



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES**

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February 25, 2020

Economic Matters Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen St Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support for HB 712 Labor and Employment - Leave With Pay - Bereavement Leave
(Family Bereavement Act)

Dear Chair Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman, and members of the committee,

The Humane Society of the United States, representing our members and supporters in Maryland, supports HB 712 introduced by Delegate Boyce to authorize employees of employers that offer paid leave to use certain leave with pay for bereavement leave in the event of the death of an immediate family member or a pet of the employee.

When a person you love dies, it's natural to feel sorrow, express grief, and expect friends and family to provide understanding and comfort.

Unfortunately, you do not always get that understanding when a pet dies. We know how much pets mean to most people. People love their pets and consider them members of their family. Animals provide companionship, acceptance, emotional support, and unconditional love. So when a beloved pet dies, it's not unusual to feel overwhelmed by the intensity of your sorrow.

Coping with the loss of a pet can be particularly hard for some. Those who live alone may feel a loss of purpose and an emptiness. A pet's death may also trigger painful memories of other losses and remind caregivers of their own mortality.

The grief process is as individual as the person, and HB 712 is an important acknowledgement about the human need to grieve loss in all of its forms for all of our beloved family members. I respectfully request the committee give HB 712 a favorable report.

Sincerely,

Emily Hovermale
Maryland and Delaware State Director