



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

Lowe House Office Building, 6 Bladen Street, Room 200 · Annapolis, Maryland 21401
Phone 410-841-3374 | 301-858-3374 · 800-492-7122 Ext. 3374 · Fax 410-841-3342 | 301-858-3342
latino.caucus@house.state.md.us · www.mdlatinocaucus.org

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TO: Delegate Dereck E. Davis, Chair
Delegate Kathleen M. Dumais, Vice Chair
Economic Matters Committee Members

FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus (MLLC)

RE: HB839 Labor and Employment - Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program - Establishment

The MLLC supports HB839 Labor and Employment - Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program – Establishment.

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation which improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a voice in the development of public policy affecting the Latino community and the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB839.

Among most advanced-economy countries in the world, the United States is the only country that does not have a national paid leave policy. States across our nation have been stepping up to provide relief for their families. While our state offers unpaid parental leave, Maryland families require benefits that will help cover their growing needs for certain circumstances. Paid family leave allows for individuals to take time off from work for birth, adoption of children, illness, or caring for a loved one.

Many Latino and immigrant households are multi-family units and multi-generational. A 2016 CLASP report, indicates that about 40% of Latinas take no leave after childbirth, compared to 27% of white women. Latinos and immigrants are also more likely to lose a job because of illness, or the need to care for a family member. These households do not have the acquired wealth to care for a grandparent who suddenly gets sick, or take unpaid time off for parental leave.

HB839 establishes a Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI) program through which employees may take up to 12 weeks of paid leave from their jobs to take care of themselves, or their loved ones. All Maryland families should be able to take some time off of work to care for a family member, without fear of insufficient resources, or job loss. It's time for the legislature to step up for every Maryland family.

The MLLC supports this bill and urges a favorable report on HB839.