

February 20, 2020

The Honorable Dereck E. Davis, Chair
House Economic Matters Committee
House Office Building, Room 231
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Testimony in **Support of House Bill 0839** – *Labor and Employment – Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program – Establishment (Time to Care Act of 2020)*

Dear Chair Davis:

I am writing in support of HB 0839, the Time to Care Act. As a working mother, caregiver, and nurse, I clearly understand the importance of paid family leave to my patients' economic security and health. Marylanders should not have to choose between losing their employment and caring for a newborn, adopted child, or sick family member. The majority of Marylanders do not have paid family leave through their jobs and more than half of our workers do not have access to unpaid family leave. Everyone should have time to care for loved ones who have health care needs or disabilities.

According to the Pew Research Center, of 41 developed countries, the United States is the only nation that does not have paid family leave. Our citizens face difficult choices and economic hardship, stress, and other burdens because they choose to leave employment to care for family members, but it does not have to be this way. A Harvard Business Review analysis shows that paid family leave would provide greater economic security for families, more workplace equality for women, and healthier families and businesses. Smaller businesses would be better able to compete with larger businesses, and Maryland companies would be more attractive to employees and more competitive in the national and global marketplace.

A poll commissioned by Maryland Family Network shows that 86% of all Maryland voters favor creation of a family and medical leave insurance program. The program has strong bipartisan support and would only cost workers three to five dollars a week in payroll deductions. Workers should have the right to partial wage replacement for up to 12 weeks to care for a new child, a sick loved one, or their own illness. Maryland should join other states who have passed paid family leave legislation and give its citizens the time to care. Thank you.

Sincerely,

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