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February 12, 2020

Senator Delores Kelley, Chair  
Finance Committee  
East Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

SB-260 - Labor and Employment - Leave With Pay - Bereavement Leave (Family Bereavement Act). **Position: Support**

Dear Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Maryland Psychological Association (MPA), which represents more than 1,100 Doctoral level psychologists from throughout the state, we are writing in support of an issue before the Committee regarding expanding the definition of family leave to include bereavement: *SB-260: Leave with Pay-Bereavement Leave (Family Bereavement Act)*.

According to Wilson, et al (2019), creating bereavement leave policies is becoming more and more important to consider as the populace ages and workers will need to miss work to grieve a loved one. Factoring in travel time as well as accommodating for worker incomes assists in relieving an additional burden during a trying event.

Maguire, et al (2014) speaks to the impact of grief on one's mental health. Enabling (and normalizing) time off for this lifecycle event gives workers additional time to psychologically adjust to the death of a family member. Ensuring that a workplace supports a worker's grief enables the worker to be able to readjust to working while grieving, according to a 2014 article in the Sunday Business Post.

The United States falls behind other industrialized countries in terms of implementing bereavement policies, leaving it to individual companies to sort out a framework. SB0260 will enable Maryland to be on par with several other states, including Oregon, New York and Illinois.

(continue on page 2)

We hope that the committee will support SB-260 as it will benefit the workers and families of Maryland. Please feel free to contact MPA's Executive Director Stefanie Reeves at [exec@marylandpsychology.org](mailto:exec@marylandpsychology.org) if we can be of assistance. We urge a favorable report for this legislation.

Sincerely,

*Kimberly Y. Campbell*

Kimberly Y. Campbell, Ph.D.  
President

*Julie Bindeman and Nicole Newhouse*

Julie Bindeman, Psy-D and Nicole Newhouse, Psy-D  
Co-Chairs, MPA Legislative Committee

cc: Richard Bloch, Esq., Counsel for Maryland Psychological Association  
J. William Pitcher, Esq., and Sarah Peters, MPA Government Affairs