



SB260 LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT - LEAVE WITH PAY - BEREAVEMENT LEAVE (FAMILY BEREAVEMENT ACT)

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FINANCE COMMITTEE

OPPOSE

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Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) opposes **SB260 Labor and Employment - Leave With Pay - Bereavement Leave (Family Bereavement Act)**. This bill expands Maryland's Flexible Leave Act by authorizing employees of certain employers (those with at least 15 employees) to use earned paid leave for bereavement leave. An employee is allowed to use bereavement leave for the death of the employee's immediate family member or the employee's pet.

SB260 infringes upon local board authority. This is a local issue and should not be legislated. AACPS currently provides bereavement leave for our employees. Such leave is outlined in applicable negotiated agreements and terms of employment. Adding bereavement leave for an employee's pet is troublesome because AACPS already provide generous leave benefits to employees and this bill would provide another avenue for employees to be off from work. In addition, we have concerns that allowing another avenue for leave will further exacerbate our ability to hire substitute teachers as we are currently experiencing a substitute teacher shortage. This bill could adversely impact AACPS students by allowing for more absences for educators and other school system employees.

In addition, this bill would increase the amount of substitute teachers AACPS would need to hire and compensate to provide coverage for these new absences, thus, resulting in an unfunded mandate.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on SB260.