

MPA_FAV_SB260

Uploaded by: Binderman, Dr. Julie

Position: FAV



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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 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

Nicole Bowers_FAV_SB260

Uploaded by: bowers, nicole

Position: FAV

Nicole Bowers
3815 Rolling Way
Nottingham MD 21236

SB260: Labor and Employment – Leave with Pay -- Bereavement Leave

Finance Committee SUPPORT FOR SB260

Madame Chair, Vice Chair and members of the Finance Committee:

Currently, bereavement in the work place is from an unemotional stand point. The days are given to get their affairs in order. But bereavement should include time for grief, and pets should be included.

The bond between a human and animal is a special one, as it is real unconditional love. Some people cannot have kids due to health or other extenuating circumstances and so pets are our children. We love and care for them just as a parent would a child. To lose a child is devastating – exactly the same as a pet.

There have been studies done (<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/why-we-need-to-take-pet-loss-seriously/>) “The *New England Journal of Medicine* reported in October 2017 that after her dog died, a woman experienced “broken heart syndrome”—a condition in which the response to grief is so severe the person exhibits symptoms that mimic a heart attack, including elevated hormone levels that can be 30 times greater than normal. “

I can tell you from my own experience on February 22 2019 my beloved corgi (dog) Ossie had to be put down. And here we are a year later and I still cry to think of him or speak his name. I attend a pet loss grief support group the third Thursday of every month. I was only given the day that he was put down and then had to be right back at work. I had no time to process. Ossie was my other half, my companion, my family. I rescued him as a baby from people that were abusing him and for the rest of my life he gave me unconditional love. Ossie and I had a special bond, one that I will never have with any other animal or human. I have anxiety and panic attacks. Somehow Ossie knew when they were coming and would jump in my lap and lick my tears or he would put his paw on my arm until I was calm. Side note – he was not a trained therapy dog; he did this because he loved me and wanted my pain, my anxiety to go away. He was letting me know that I was not alone and that he understood.

This is so hard for me to read this as a type. Pets are not just pets. They are living, breathing, thoughtful beings just like we are. They feel, they think, they love. As a pet owner I ask that you seriously pass this bill.

We deserve time to grieve for our family members. For some people their “pet” is the only family they have. Thank you for the opportunity to write this and thank you for your consideration. I ask for a

FAVORABLE REPORT on SB 260.

Sincerely,

NICOLE BOWERS

Nicole

Gilcrest_Fav_SB260

Uploaded by: Driscoe, Mark

Position: FAV

February 11, 2020

Senator Mary Washington, District 43
11 Bladen Street, Room 102
Annapolis, MD 21401


Dear Senator Washington:

As the Manager of Bereavement Services for Gilchrist, I am aware of the invaluable impact of counseling and support for people who are anticipating or surviving the death of a loved one. Grief, whether anticipated or unexpected, can metaphorically take you out at the knees. Evidence shows grief can profoundly inhibit one's social, emotional and physical capacity. Gilchrist is the largest not for profit organization in the state that provides hospice, elder medical care, and counseling and support services to help people and their families at every stage of end of life care to live life to the fullest and make informed choices about their care. Since 1994, the organization has served hundreds of thousands of individuals throughout Central Maryland – in homes, skilled nursing and residential care communities and at three inpatient hospice centers in Baltimore County, Howard County, and Baltimore City.

Approximately 94% of U.S. employers offer paid bereavement leave through a separate policy or as part of a paid time off or paid sick time plan. However, that length of time varies often being 1-3 days which is not enough time to safely or effectively deal with the death of a loved one. The emotional and physiological changes that occur affect one's ability to carry out their daily activities of living. While at the same time that grieving person has to take care of the financial, legal and logistical implications that accompany death. Sufficient paid bereavement leave can promote a productive and empathetic workplace because it gives employees time to grieve.

An established bereavement policy will support an employee's physical and mental health. This improved health will aid a business by avoiding physical injuries and poor decision-making that occur due to grief. The Grief Recovery Institute reports that **85 percent of management-level employees described their decision-making as "very poor" to "fair"** in the weeks or months following a grief incident that affected them. Over 90 percent of those in physical jobs reported a much higher incidence of physical injuries, due to reduced concentration, in the weeks or months following the grief incident. Grief support and adequate leave during a period of bereavement can help to eliminate these types of on-the-job mistakes.

According to research by Talent Smart, the ability to manage emotions and mental stress has a direct link to performance. As a Forbes publication stated, taking time off to disconnect from work is effective in coping with mental stress. It's clear that a grieving employee will not be able to achieve



optimal performance. Thus, the best way to regain productivity is to allow the employee the time off he or she needs to grieve the death of a loved one's life.

On behalf of Gilchrist, I fully support Bill SB260, Family Bereavement Act.

Thank you,



Robin Contino
Manager of Bereavement Services
Gilchrist

Mark Driscoll_FAV_SB260

Uploaded by: Driscoe, Mark

Position: FAV

Mark Driscoll
212 Quail Run Dr
Centreville, MD 21617

Title

**Labor and Employment - Leave With Pay - Bereavement Leave
(Family Bereavement Act)**

Sponsored by

Senators [Washington](#), [Benson](#), [Carter](#), [Lam](#), [Lee](#), [Patterson](#), and [Sydnor](#)

Status

In the Senate - Hearing 2/13 at 1:00 p.m.

Analysis

[Fiscal and Policy Note](#)

Synopsis

Authorizing employees of certain employers 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.

As a Firefighter/EMT, I see families lose their loved ones on a weekly, sometimes daily, basis. Many times, family members are not prepared to hear the words telling them that their loved one is dead, and even when they are "prepared," I have to wonder how much one can truly prepare to have one of their strongest bonds ripped away from them without having any control. Most people need to take time to get affairs in order for burial, arrangements for a funeral, coordination of family and friends traveling to pay their respects, and once all of that is said and done, mental health becomes a focus as they start moving through the grieving process.

As a Mental Health First Aid Instructor and First Responder, I am very much in tune with how important the grieving process can be. While it may not seem like people can truly benefit from only one or two days of time away from work in these situations, I can speak for certainty that having this time available has been proven to help individuals recognize that their lives have changed. It allows people to process what their life may look like moving forward, and to come up with a plan of how they will recover emotionally. In fact, it has been shown that many cases of drug addiction have resulted in individuals now being allowed the proper amount of time to adjust to their new life. Human beings are meant to bond with one another. It is an innate part of who we are. When we have developed a bond so strong that we love unconditionally, trust immensely, and give of ourselves freely - the types of bonds that we share with family members, the breaking of that bond can best be described by the words of my former patient's family member. "Some events are so tragic that they cut through your mind like a razor blade and leave you feeling profound loss. Loss for that person, but also lost for yourself."

As a Pet First Aid & CPR Instructor, companion animal owner, and a person that relies on the bonds that I have formed with my pets to help me through the day to day stress of life, I ask that pets be included

as family members for the purposes of this bill. People that own pets as companion animals, especially people that do not stand to make any financial gain from their companion animal, develop the same bonds that any of us grow with our family members. Our pets see us in our best of times, but they also see us in our absolute worst. They are there, loving us unconditionally, no matter what the circumstances. This is a special type of bond that most people do not even share with their closest family members.

For all of these reasons and many more that you will hear today, and as a Maryland resident, I humbly ask for a FAVORABLE REPORT on HB 736.

Respectfully,

MARK DRISCOLL

Mark Driscoll

Humane Society of the US_FAV_SB 260

Uploaded by: Hovermale, Emily

Position: FAV



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES**

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February 13, 2020

Finance Committee
Maryland Senate
11 Bladen St Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support for SB 260 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 SB 260 introduced by Senator Washington 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. Some people still do not understand how central animals can be in people's lives, and a few may not understand grieving over "just a pet."

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, like seniors. 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 SB 260 is an important acknowledgement about the human need to grieve loss. I respectfully request the committee give SB 260 a favorable report.

Sincerely,

Emily Hovermale
Maryland and Delaware State Director

Jaynine Jones_Fav_SB260

Uploaded by: Jones, Jaynine

Position: FAV

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 712
“Family Bereavement Act”

Greetings. I am Jayneene Jones, MS, NCC. I currently serve as the Bereavement Coordinator for Holy Cross Home Care & Hospice Bereavement Center. My specialized bereavement services include educating and counseling individuals who have experienced loss. I provide these critical services to our patients and their families as well as those in our community.

Working in this field for twenty years and witnessing the impact of those who have lost loved ones, it is far overdue for employers to recognize the importance and value of providing bereavement leave to employees. With the introduction of **SB260/HB712, Family Bereavement Act**, we have the potential to finally fill in a vital gap all working Marylanders have been missing.

It cannot be forgotten what is attached to every loss. Grief. Grief is on the other side of love and love can never be ignored in loss. Grief is experienced by all and it must be recognized that everyone deals with grief differently.

Grief shows itself in many ways. There is **Normative grief**, **Anticipatory grief**, **Ambiguous grief**, and **Complicated grief**, but there is one aspect of grief that is of the utmost importance for this body to recognize: **Disenfranchised grief**. This is the loss of a pet. This experience is misunderstood and therefore not recognized by society, but counselors everywhere understand the loss of a pet often equates to the tragic loss of a beloved family member.

Just as important as the classification, is the impact the grief has on individual employees. Those in a state of grief are in a mental fog and can experience short-term memory loss. Frequently and especially under the circumstances of a tragic accident, some never get back to

the person they used to be. They may again become functional, but in losing a loved one, they lose a part of themselves.

While the impact is a mental health issue, it also impacts the griever physically, emotionally and spiritually, and for varied amounts of time. Many will grieve anywhere from several days to several months. For others it can last for up to a couple of years, but unfortunately, for some, the grief is felt for the entirety of their life. It may be felt off and on, but it never leaves.

With the full understanding of grief, it is unrealistic and unreliable for either employer or employee to believe there is an ability to give an organization their full focus, talents, and time on the job, while in a state of grief.

Employers need employees who are mentally, emotionally and physically present and in the atmosphere of grief, this is not an option. Employees need the support of their employers to handle their battle with grief without feeling the pressure to ignore it in order to perform at work. This only leads to further problems down the road, problems which can be handled if all parties move proactively from the very start.

This bill presents the perfect opportunity for employers to continue to show how much they truly value their employees holistically and understand that including bereavement leave can only enhance the culture of their organizations.

For these reasons, I ask for a FAVORABLE REPORT on **SB260/HB712**.

Karen Klima_Fav_SB260

Uploaded by: Klima, Karen

Position: FAV

Karen Ann Klima, BA, BSN, PN-C, PGRS-C
4505 Weitzel Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21214

SB260: Labor and Employment – Leave with Pay – Bereavement Leave

Finance Committee SUPPORT FOR SB260

Madame Chair, Vice Chair and members of the Finance Committee:

My personal story which prompted the idea for this bill began after my beloved dog, Lucy, died in June of 2018. For ten and a half years, we were inseparable. While I knew I would be sad when the time came I could never have imagined the profound grief that followed. This grief was greater than any I have ever experienced despite having buried close friends and both of my parents over the years. I could not eat, I could not sleep, I could barely function at work. I honestly felt like I could just die. **I was suffering profound grief.** I actually had a funeral and burial service for Lucy which was attended by over 100 people. More people than I will probably have at mine. But the thing that helped me turn the corner most was attending a Pet Loss Support Group at the Humane Society. I was in a room with people who were just as sad as I was and that knowing helped greatly through my grief process.

As a registered nurse, I took an advanced course to become a Pet Loss Grief Recovery Specialist and went on to start the first pet loss support group in Baltimore called LOU, Lifting Other Up. This support group is a safe place where people, many of whom are employed in the state of Maryland, share their stories and grief journey in a world where there are many, including employers, who just do not understand or support a grieving employee because their dog or cat is sick or just died. This is where the idea to find employer support for bereavement following the loss of pet began. I am here to speak for the employees who I have listened to at my pet loss support groups who have shared they have added stress because their employer 'doesn't get it' that their dog or cat is ill or died. It would please me to know that the state of Maryland gets it.

I reached out to Senator Washington's office who took my query seriously and I thank her for that. After Senator Washington's team researched the subject, I was surprised to learn that Maryland does not have a bereavement leave law at all! My research found that only one other state has a bereavement leave law and that one does not include the mourning of pets. I am here today to ask the state of Maryland to show compassion to employees who need to take time off to manage their bereavement and affairs after the loss of a truly loved one. Additionally, the research presented to you today substantiates that the loss of a pet can be equal to or greater than the loss of a human as well as the fact that a majority of pet owners regard their pets as family.

And to this point, in 2016, our Governor Hogan grieved the death of his dog, Lexi, and was quoted as saying: "For 16 years our dog Lexi has been a much loved member of our family".

I enclose a poignant YouTube clip to emphasize the profound effect following the death of a pet:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yTMxTytvU3Q>



Losing a dog is like losing a family member

Why does losing a dog feel like losing a family member? The way we attach to dogs is similar to the way we attach to humans. The challenge is to mourn the loss of a dog the same way we mourn the loss of a human. I try to do that here by remembering Mwaji. Special thanks to Elizabeth S., Tyler D., Anna H., Arnt J., Collin P., Evan A., Imran M ...

www.youtube.com

I ask for a FAVORABLE REPORT on SB260.

Respectfully,

Karen Ann Klima

Dr. Wendy Packman_FAV_SB260

Uploaded by: packman, wendy

Position: FAV

Wendy Packman, JD, PhD

Professor Emerita of Psychology at Palo Alto University

2578 16th avenue

San Francisco, CA 94116

SB260: Labor and Employment – Leave with Pay -- Bereavement Leave

Finance Committee SUPPORT FOR SB260

Madame Chair, Vice Chair and members of the Finance Committee:

I understand that a bill has been proposed for employers to offer bereavement leave to include the mourning of Pets

[SB260, Family Bereavement Act.

View Link Here: <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2020RS/bills/sb/sb0260F.pdf>]

This is, indeed, excellent news. I am in support of this bill regarding the benefits of bereavement leave following the loss of a beloved companion animal.

A. Personal Statement

I am Professor Emerita of Psychology at Palo Alto University (Palo Alto, California). I am trained as both a clinical pediatric psychologist and an attorney. My research focuses on populations that are vulnerable, and, often, ignored. Unfortunately, the death of a pet may not be fully recognized or validated by spouses, friends, or acquaintances as a significant bereavement. As a result, griever are often isolated and left without societal support. The focus of my research is *continuing bonds* – the way we stay emotionally connected to those who have died. The phenomenon of continuing bonds (CB) has only recently been labeled as such in the pet bereavement literature (Carmack & Packman, 2011; Packman, Field, Carmack, & Ronen, 2011). I conducted and published the first systematic studies of pet loss and continuing bonds. In our initial pet loss study we examined and quantified the type of CB expressions that occur among bereaved pet owners. The results confirmed that individuals experience dimensions of CB following the death of their beloved companion animals; the majority of bereaved pet owners maintain ongoing, meaningful ties with their deceased pet. I am the primary investigator of an ongoing international cross-cultural study examining the continuing impact of a pet's death. excerpts from some of my studies:

Excerpts from recent studies:

Because the human-pet relationship constitutes an attachment bond, a similar response to separation and loss of a pet has been found to that following the loss of a human attachment bond (Field, Orsini, Gavish, & Packman, 2009; Packman et al., 2011). Indeed, the grief following the death of a pet manifests itself in similar ways to that experienced after human loss in terms of sleep disruption and social and psychological challenges (Archer & Winchester, 1994; Carmack & Packman, 2011; Quackenbush, 1985). Gerwolls and Labott (1994) assessed whether the loss of a pet was different from the

loss of a human companion (parent, child, or spouse). At 2 and 8 weeks post-loss, the grief scores (Grief Experiences Inventory) of those who had lost a pet were similar to those who had lost a human companion. At 6 months post-loss, there were no statistically significant differences in grief scores between the two groups.

Packman, W., Carmack, B.J., Katz, R., Carlos, F., Field, N.P., & Landers, C. (2014). Online survey as empathic bridging for the disenfranchised grief of pet loss. *Omega*. 69(4) 333-356

In order to illustrate the similarities in the incidence of different types of CB expressions in pet loss with human loss, we show a comparison in Table 2 with a spousal loss sample involving the loss of a husband between 1 and 2 years previously (Field, 2010). The mean grief symptom score for the spousal sample (M.2.16, SD..81) was not significantly different from the mean grief score in the pet sample (M.2.32, SD..84, ns). This justified comparing the two samples on the CB measures.

Both groups are similar in many ways. First, in terms of relative frequency of endorsement, there is remarkable correspondence between the two samples. For example, both samples have high endorsement of reminiscing with others, focusing on fond memories, and use of the belongings of the deceased. Both groups correspondingly have low endorsement for everyday choices and intrusions. Second, the paired t-test results comparing comfort with distress ratings indicated that participants in both groups reported CB as significantly more comforting than distressing for most of the CB expressions

Packman, W., Field, N.P., Carmack, B.J., & Ronen, R. (2011). Continuing bonds and psychosocial adjustment in pet loss. *Journal of Loss and Trauma*, 16:4, 341-357, DOI 10.1080/15325024.2011.572046

We investigated continuing bonds (CB) and a range of psychosocial outcomes among 4,336 recently bereaved pet owners recruited through online and in-person support venues. The present study, to the best of our knowledge, is the largest evaluation of experiences related to recent pet loss, and may be particularly relevant to those most likely to seek support following the loss of a pet. Bereaved pet owners reported using a wide range of CB and associated levels of comfort and distress. Similar to our pilot work on this topic (Packman et al., 2011), the top three endorsed CB in terms of frequency were fond memories, reminiscing, and use of deceased pet's belongings for comfort.

Descriptive data provide an important contextual framework to understand our findings. Most importantly, this was a very recently bereaved sample (all within one year, and the median time since death was 4 days). As might be expected given this sample's recent losses, participants reported a high level of grief severity (M = 3.5, SD = 0.85), as compared with results using the same grief measure from our pilot study for this pet loss project (Packman et al.,

2011; $M = 2.3$, $SD = 0.84$), previous work on pet loss (Field et al., 2009; $M = 2.15$, $SD = 0.82$), and previous work on recent human loss (Filanosky, 2003; $M = 2.55$, $SD = 1.07$).

Habarth, J., Bussolari, C., Gomez, R., Carmack, B., Ronen, R., Field, N.P., & **Packman, W.**, (2017). Continuing Bonds and Psychosocial Functioning in a Recently Bereaved Pet Loss Sample. *Anthrozoos*, 30:4, 651-670

Bibliography:

Field, N.P., Orsini, L., Gavish, R. & **Packman, W.** (2009). Role of attachment in response to pet loss. *Death Studies*, 33(4), 332-355.

Packman, W., Field, N.P., Carmack, B.J., & Ronen, R. (2011). Continuing bonds and psychosocial adjustment in pet loss. *Journal of Loss and Trauma*, 16:4, 341-357, DOI 10.1080/15325024.2011.572046

Packman, W., Carmack, B.J., & Ronen, R. (2012). Therapeutic Implications of Continuing Bonds Expressions Following the Death of a Pet. *Omega*, 64(4) 335-356.

Packman, W., Carmack, B.J., Katz, R., Carlos, F., Field, N.P., & Landers, C. (2014). Online survey as empathic bridging for the disenfranchised grief of pet loss. *Omega*. 69(4) 333-356

Packman, W., Bussolari, C., Katz, R., Carmack, B.J., & Field, N.P. (2016). Post-traumatic growth following the loss of a pet. *Omega*. DOI: 10.1177/0030222816663411

Packman, W., Kelley, E., Rudolph, B., Long, J., Wallace, J., Hsu, M., Carmack, B. & Field, N. (2017). Projective drawings following pet loss; Clinical utility and predictive findings. *Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association*. 34(19) 1-9.

Bussolari, C., Habarth, J., Kimpara, S., Katz, R., Carlos, F., Chow, A., Osada, H., Osada, Y., Carmack, B.J., Field, N.P. & **Packman, W.**, (2017). Post-traumatic growth following the loss of a pet: A cross-cultural comparison. *Omega*. DOI: 10.1177/0030222817690403

Habarth, J., Bussolari, C., Gomez, R., Carmack, B., Ronen, R., Field, N.P., & **Packman, W.**, (2017). Continuing Bonds and Psychosocial Functioning in a Recently Bereaved Pet Loss Sample. *Anthrozoos*, 30:4, 651-670.

Schmidt, M., Naylor, P. E., Cohen, D., Gomez, R., Moses, J. A., Rappoport, M., & **Packman W.** (2018). Pet loss and Continuing Bonds in children and adolescents. *Death Studies*.

Bussolari, C., Habarth, J., Phillips, S., Katz, R., & **Packman, W.** (2018). Self-Compassion, Social Constraints, and Psychosocial Outcomes in a Pet Bereavement Sample. *Omega*. DOI: 10.1177/0030222818814050

Books and Book Chapters:

Carmack, B.J. & **Packman, W.** (2011). Pet Loss: The Interface of Continuing Bonds Research and Practice. In R. Neimeyer, D. Harris, & G. Thornton (Eds.) *Grief and Bereavement in Contemporary Society: Bridging Research and Practice* (pp. 273-284). New York: Routledge.

Packman, W., Bussolari, C., Katz, R., & Carmack, B.J. (2016). Continuing Bonds Research with Animal Companions: Implications for Men Grieving the Loss of a Dog, In L. Kogan and C. Blazina (Eds.) *Men and Their Dogs: A New Psychological Understanding of Man's Best Friend* (pp. 303-320). Springer

Bussolari, C., & **Packman, W.** (2019). Therapeutic continuing bond interventions with bereaved pet owners. In L. R. Kogan & P. Erdman (Eds.), *Pet loss and Mental Health Care Providers – The Essential Handbook* University Press.

Examples of my research and presentations in the area of bereavement and loss:

Packman, W., Horsley, H., Davies, B., & Kramer, R. (2006). Continuing bonds and sibling bereavement. *Death Studies*, 30(9), 817-841.

Ronen, R., **Packman, W.**, Field, N.P., Davies, B., Kramer, R., & Long, J. (2009). The relationship between grief adjustment and continuing bonds for parents who have lost a child. *Omega*, 60(1), 1-31.

Field, N.P., **Packman, W.**, Ronen, R., Pries, A., Davies, B., & Kramer, R. (2013). Continuing bonds in death of a child. *Death Studies*. 37:10, 889-912, DOI:10.1080/07481187.2012.692458

Field, N.P., Strasser, J., Taing, S., Horuchi S., Chhim, S., & **Packman, W.** (2014). Prolonged grief following the recent death of a daughter among mothers who experienced distal losses during the Khmer Rouge era: Validity of the prolonged grief construct in Cambodia. *Psychiatry Research* .<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2014.05.014>

Presentations

Pet Loss and Continuing Bonds; Virtual Data Collected from the Virtual World;
The 10th International Conference on Grief and Bereavement in Contemporary Society. Invited Speaker: Hong Kong, June, 2014

Child Bereavement- Clinical issues and Interventions;
Community Health Awareness Council (CHAC) Mountain View, March, 2014, 2015

Wendy Packman: Open to Hope Foundation : Invited submissions on coping with pet loss.
<http://www.opentohope.com/>.

Thank you for the opportunity to write this and thank you for your consideration. I ask for a FAVORABLE REPORT on SB 260.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Wendy Packman".

Wendy Packman, JD, PhD

Professor Emerita

Pacific Graduate School of Psychology

Palo Alto University

Director, Emerita, Joint JD-PhD Program in Psychology and Law

1791 Arastradero Road

Palo Alto, CA 94304

email: wpackman@paloalto.edu

Maryland Votes for Animals_Fav_SB260

Uploaded by: radov, lisa

Position: FAV



MARYLAND VOTES FOR ANIMALS

PO Box 10411
BALTIMORE, MD 21209

February 13, 2020

Dear Chairman Kelley, Vice Chairman Feldman, and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

As the President and Chairman of Maryland Votes for Animals, Inc., I am writing to you in support of SB 260 - Labor and Unemployment Leave With Pay – Bereavement Leave (Family Bereavement Act).

As you know, Maryland Votes for Animals champions humane legislation to improve the lives of animals in Maryland. We also value the people with whom our animals spend their time. In fact, most families consider their pets to be cherished family members. Therefore, I am writing to you as the voice not of the animals, but of the humans who love their pets.

Our relationships with our animals is very personal. Many of them live for decades in our homes. The twenty years that a cat or dog lives is similar to the time a child spends in their parents' home before they go to work or college. Our pets see us at our best, and are there to comfort us at our worst. People speak emotionally about how a pet helped them get through a difficult time including PTSD, relationship strife, divorces, substance abuse, and the loss of a loved one.

Many of you on the Senate Finance Committee have pets. Sadly, some of you have most likely suffered the loss of a beloved pet. As the owner of an insurance agency and premium finance company for thirty years, I have heard my employees wax poetic about their pets. I believe that employees would deeply appreciate this option to use leave with pay in the face of losing a beloved pet who was a valued family member. Moreover, from a purely business standpoint, they are less likely to be productive when they are dealing with the loss.

Our pets are often the first face that we see when we wake up, and the first when we get home from school or work. They often come into the bathroom with us and sleep in our beds. Therefore, in such a close personal relationship as with a beloved family member, it seems fair that employees should be able to take bereavement time with pay just as they would for a human family member within the limits specified in SB 260.

I urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 260.

Sincerely,
Lisa G. Radov
President and Chairman
Maryland Votes for Animals, Inc.
www.voteanimals.org
radovlisa@gmail.com
443-286-5457

Let Kindness Reign, Vote Humane

WWW.VOTEANIMALS.ORG

APLB_FAV_SB260

Uploaded by: rolland, colleen

Position: FAV

APLB

the association for pet loss and bereavement, inc.



Address:

PO Box 194
Kawkawkin, MI 48631

Telephone:

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Email:

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Officers:

Colleen Rolland, MA
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Debra Bjorling
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Laurie Koen
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Marsha Zimmer
Treasurer

Board of Directors:

Dr. Wallace Sife Chair, CEO
Ellie Waldron Pres. Emeritus
Michelle Crossley, Ph.D.
Kathryn Jennings, CPLP, CPFE
Marina Resa
Kevin Ringstaff
Sarah Robinson

To whom it may concern:

February 10, 2020

From: Colleen Rolland, MA
President, Association for Pet Loss & Bereavement (APLB)

I understand that a bill has been proposed for employers to offer bereavement leave to include the mourning of pets, SB260, Family Bereavement Act.

<http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2020RS/bills/sb/sb0260F.pdf>

On behalf of our Association, we are in full support of this bill.

Dr. Wallace Sife, our founder and chairman of the Board, set up this Association in 1997. As a pioneer in the field of pet loss, his book "The Loss of a Pet, 4th ed." is widely accepted as the handbook for dealing with animal companion loss and bereavement. Now entering our 24th year, we have been host to over 70,000 bereaving pet parents in our on-line chat rooms, hosted several times weekly. We were at the forefront of this very necessary service, and others now have followed suit.

The human-animal bond is one that can be traced back through the history of mankind. Today, more than ever, in our uncertain and fast-paced lives, more and more people are turning to animal companions as a source of unconditional love and companionship. Today, this is not restricted to one segment of society, but includes a wide-range of age groups, across all professions, ethnicities, religious groups, and is non-gender specific.

People love their pets and when they die they mourn them as they would a member of their own family. Indeed, as a pet loss grief specialist, I hear, without exception from clients that they are a) totally devastated by their loss and b) that some are grieving more for their companion than they have for a close *human* relative. This is not abnormal and speaks to the intensity of the bond.

Due to the unique love provided by animal companions, that bond is exceedingly strong. Research shows that it is underscored by the physical and mental health benefits which include, but are not limited to: reduced blood pressure through petting and holding the animal, reduced feelings of anxiety and isolation for those living alone,

Mary Washington_Fav_SB260

Uploaded by: Senator Washington, Senator Washington

Position: FAV

MARY L. WASHINGTON, PH.D
Legislative District 43
Baltimore City

Judicial Proceedings Committee

Chair

Joint Committee on Ending
Homelessness

Chair

Joint Committee on Children,
Youth, and Families



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Annapolis Office
James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 102
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3145 • 301-858-3145
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**SB260: Labor and Employment – Leave with Pay -- Bereavement Leave
(Family Bereavement Act)**

**February 13, 2020
Finance Committee**

Madame Chair, Vice Chair and members of the Finance Committee:

In the state of Maryland we have done an admirable job establishing definitions for types of leave. Current statute allows for leave for a personal illness or to take care of an ill family member, but there is nowhere in current statute that codifies bereavement as a qualified leave category.

SB260, The Family Bereavement Act, simply codifies “bereavement” as a form of leave under the current leave statute. This legislation **does not mandate leave, extend leave or add leave**, it simply recognizes bereavement as a *permissible* form of leave. This bill would in no way change or affect any leave policies that employers may or may not currently offer. It simply would make bereavement a recognized form of leave at workplaces that already offer leave to their employees.

And to be very clear, SB260 does not impede on or distract from the *Maryland Sick & Safe* or the *Time to Care Acts* because the legislation would fall under the existing Maryland Flexible Leave Act which already provides paid leave to its employees and prohibit the employer from taking action against an employee who exercises the rights granted under this provision.

Why is Bereavement Leave Important?

Research by the NIH, the American Psychiatric and Psychological Associations, and numerous experts in the field of human services recognize that when an individual experiences a loss of a loved one, they undergo differing levels of trauma associated with that loss. And without proper time for acclimation, individuals can experience damage to their mental health and other long-term negative effects. The effects of trauma experienced may exacerbate or lead to substance abuse, depression, anxiety, sleep disorders, relationship issues etc.

Bereavement leave, just as other forms of leave, provides needed time to recover from incidents in life that would otherwise impede a person's capability of fully performing their employment responsibilities and preventing further negative impacts.

- The Society for Human Resource Management has acknowledged that Individuals need time without the stress and obligations of their employment to handle the affairs surrounding the loss of a loved one. It can be a full time job dealing with a funeral, settling an estate, handling a loved one's personal effects etc.
- Mourning a loss can cause focus and concentration issues, inability to handle stress, time management – all things that can negatively impact job performance and performance evaluation.
- Allowing for proper bereavement leave can only benefit employers -- employees will return more focused, which ultimately promotes a more productive employee.
- For many individuals, pets are loved ones and for some their only loved ones or only real family. This bill would allow employees to take bereavement leave for the death of their pet.

In conclusion, providing clarity in the law, by codifying "bereavement" as a leave type, would ultimately benefit both the individual and the employer. Therefore I urge a favorable report on SB260.

In Partnership,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mary Washington". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Senator Mary Washington,
District 43

GilChrist_Fav_SB260

Uploaded by: wollman, sharron

Position: FAV

February 11, 2020

Senator Mary Washington, District 43
11 Bladen Street, Room 102
Annapolis, MD 21401


Dear Senator Washington:

As the Manager of Bereavement Services for Gilchrist, I am aware of the invaluable impact of counseling and support for people who are anticipating or surviving the death of a loved one. Grief, whether anticipated or unexpected, can metaphorically take you out at the knees. Evidence shows grief can profoundly inhibit one's social, emotional and physical capacity. Gilchrist is the largest not for profit organization in the state that provides hospice, elder medical care, and counseling and support services to help people and their families at every stage of end of life care to live life to the fullest and make informed choices about their care. Since 1994, the organization has served hundreds of thousands of individuals throughout Central Maryland – in homes, skilled nursing and residential care communities and at three inpatient hospice centers in Baltimore County, Howard County, and Baltimore City.

Approximately 94% of U.S. employers offer paid bereavement leave through a separate policy or as part of a paid time off or paid sick time plan. However, that length of time varies often being 1-3 days which is not enough time to safely or effectively deal with the death of a loved one. The emotional and physiological changes that occur affect one's ability to carry out their daily activities of living. While at the same time that grieving person has to take care of the financial, legal and logistical implications that accompany death. Sufficient paid bereavement leave can promote a productive and empathetic workplace because it gives employees time to grieve.

An established bereavement policy will support an employee's physical and mental health. This improved health will aid a business by avoiding physical injuries and poor decision-making that occur due to grief. The Grief Recovery Institute reports that **85 percent of management-level employees described their decision-making as "very poor" to "fair"** in the weeks or months following a grief incident that affected them. Over 90 percent of those in physical jobs reported a much higher incidence of physical injuries, due to reduced concentration, in the weeks or months following the grief incident. Grief support and adequate leave during a period of bereavement can help to eliminate these types of on-the-job mistakes.

According to research by Talent Smart, the ability to manage emotions and mental stress has a direct link to performance. As a Forbes publication stated, taking time off to disconnect from work is effective in coping with mental stress. It's clear that a grieving employee will not be able to achieve



optimal performance. Thus, the best way to regain productivity is to allow the employee the time off he or she needs to grieve the death of a loved one's life.

On behalf of Gilchrist, I fully support Bill SB260, Family Bereavement Act.

Thank you,



Robin Contino
Manager of Bereavement Services
Gilchrist

Lori Doyle_UNF_SB260

Uploaded by: doyle, lori

Position: UNF



Testimony on SB 260
Labor and Employment – Leave With Pay –
Bereavement Leave (Family Bereavement Act)
Senate Finance Committee
February 12, 2020
POSITION: OPPOSE

The Community Behavioral Health Association of Maryland is the professional organization for providers of community-based mental health and substance use disorder treatment services. Our members serve the majority of the almost-300,000 children and adults who access care through the public behavioral health system. We provide outpatient treatment, residential and day programs, case management and assertive community treatment (ACT), employment supports, and crisis intervention.

CBH members routinely provide paid bereavement leave for the death of an immediate family member, in addition to paid time off for sickness or vacations. Our concern is that SB 260 would extend that paid time off to bereavement for pets. Organizations serving Medicaid recipients with serious mental health and substance use disorders already struggle with high staff vacancies due to a combination of low salaries and employees on extended or intermittent leave (such as that covered by the Americans With Disabilities Act, the Family Medical Leave Act, and the Maryland Healthy Working Families Act). These high staff vacancies are even more pronounced in residential programs that operate 24/7, overnight, and on weekends. So while we empathize with the pain caused by the loss of a pet, we must balance the desire for time off against the needs of our clients.

CBH is also concerned that the bill does not define “pet.” We are unsure as to whether the bill covers only domesticated animals, such as dogs and cats, or also livestock, fish, and other non-traditional pets. Further we know of no way to easily verify the death of a pet since there is no death notice or other proof.

For these reasons we urge an unfavorable report on SB 260.

MDCC_Griffin_UNFAV_SB260

Uploaded by: Griffin, Andrew

Position: UNF



LEGISLATIVE POSITION:

Unfavorable

Senate Bill 260—Family Bereavement Act
Senate Finance Committee

Thursday, February 13, 2020

Dear Chairwoman Kelley and Members of the Committee:

Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce is the leading voice for business in Maryland. We are a statewide coalition of more than 4,500 members and federated partners, and we work to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic growth for Maryland businesses, employees and families. Through our work, we seek to maintain a balance in the relationship between employers and employees within the State through the establishment of policies that promote fairness and ease restrictive burdens.

Senate Bill 260 would require employers to provide leave with pay for bereavement in the event of the death of an immediate family member or a pet of the employee.

The Chamber is concerned over the possible implications of this legislation for several reasons. First, most employees are already able to utilize vacation or paid time off (PTO) for personal reasons, which would include time off for bereavement. As well, we are concerned that the statute would allow employees to use sick leave for bereavement. This would be inconsistent and in conflict with the existing sick leave statute, which lists very specific reasons for the use of sick leave.

Additionally, employers already face tremendous challenges with respect to the ability to verify reasons presented for PTO. This is further complicated by the fact that, unlike with humans, there is no ability to verify the death of a pet. Additionally, qualifying pets are not defined by the bill, leaving the possibility open for employees to request bereavement leave for the death of a goldfish or snake.

Most employers already provide paid time off (PTO) which permits an employee to use leave to cover an absence, including those connected to bereavement. Employers should be allowed the flexibility to determine the terms that best fit their needs based on any number of factors.

For these reasons, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests an **Unfavorable Report** on Senate Bill 260, as presented.

MNCHA_MAADS_LifeSpan_Danna Kauffman_UNF_SB0260

Uploaded by: Kauffman, Danna

Position: UNF



TO: The Honorable Delores Kelley, Chair
Members, Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Mary Washington

FROM: Danna L. Kauffman
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer

DATE: February 13, 2020

RE: OPPOSE (Written Only) – Senate Bill 260: *Labor and Employment – Leave With Pay*
– *Bereavement Leave (Family Bereavement Act)*

On behalf of the LifeSpan Network, the Maryland Association of Adult Day Services, and the Maryland-National Capital Homecare Association, we **oppose** Senate Bill 260. This bill would allow an employee (of an employer with at least 15 employees) to use bereavement leave for the death of the employee's immediate family member or the employee's pet. Our opposition is in the inclusion of an employee's pet.

Our organizations provide necessary health care services, often to the State's most frail and vulnerable residents. When a caregiver is absent, organizations must still provide services. Often, this puts a strain on the organization and may require the organization to contract with a nurse staffing agency to fill the vacancy, an added expense and one that may not always be in the best interest of the individual(s) being served. While we understand that the death of a pet can be very difficult, we believe that it is best handled between the employer and the employee and not mandated in law. We urge an unfavorable report on SB 260.

For more information call:

Danna L. Kauffman
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
Richard A. Tabuteau
410-244-7000

AACPS SB260 Pet Bereavement Leave OPP 2.13.20

Uploaded by: Ortiz, Jeanette

Position: UNF



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

February 13, 2020
FINANCE COMMITTEE

OPPOSE

Jeanette Ortiz, Esq., Legislative & Policy Counsel (410.703.5352)

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.