



# Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women

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Bill No: Senate Bill 539  
Title: Labor and Employment— Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program— Establishment  
Committee: Finance  
Hearing Date: February 27, 2020  
Position: SUPPORT

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The Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women (MLAW) is a statewide coalition of women’s groups and individuals formed to provide a non-partisan, independent voice for Maryland women and families. MLAW’s purpose is to advocate for legislation affecting women and families. To accomplish this goal, MLAW creates an annual legislative agenda with issues voted on by MLAW members and endorsed by organizations and individuals from all over Maryland. **Senate Bill 539 is a priority on the 2020 MLAW Agenda.**

MLAW supports Senate Bill 539 because this bill 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 care for new children, other family members with serious health conditions or disabilities, or themselves. The benefit level is calculated based on the employee’s weekly wage and the State’s average weekly wage. In general, the amount received by low-income employees reflects a higher percentage of their total wages.

We all need time to care—for new babies, for aging parents, for loved ones with health needs or disabilities, or for ourselves.

Yet many Marylanders can’t take time to care because they lack paid family leave. Only 17% of U.S. workers have access to paid family leave and fewer than 40% have paid personal leave for short-term disabilities. Unpaid leave forces too many Americans, especially those whose needs are the greatest, to choose between income and family when illness strikes, when new babies arrive, or when the needs of a family member with a disability intensify. Nearly 25% of women, for example, take 10 or fewer days of parental leave, potentially putting themselves and their children at risk physically and emotionally.

Eight states and the District of Columbia have created paid leave programs and the federal government just enacted paid family leave for federal employees. Paid leave programs are proven to reduce poverty and improve public health outcomes.

The Time to Care Act establishes a Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program making paid leave available to Maryland workers for up to 12 weeks following the birth or adoption of a child and when needed to provide care for a family member or oneself. The leave would be funded through an insurance pool, into which workers and their employers contribute.

**The Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women strongly urges the passage of Senate Bill 539.**

**Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women (MLAW)**

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# MLAW Supporting Organizations

The following organizations have signed on in support of 2020 Legislative Agenda:

AAUW Maryland  
Anne Arundel County Commission for Women  
Anne Arundel County NOW  
Baltimore County Women's Commission  
Business and Professional Women of Maryland (BPW/MD)  
Calvert County Commission for Women  
Charles County Commission of Veterans Affairs  
DC Coalition for Safe and Just Communities  
Federation of Jewish Women's Organization of Maryland  
Greater Washington Jewish Coalition Against Domestic Abuse (JCADA)  
HopeWorks of Howard County  
Laurel RESIST  
Law Office of Carole D. Brown, LLC  
Lincoln Park Historical Foundation  
Maryland Business and Professional Women  
Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault  
Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence  
Maryland NOW  
Maryland Women's Heritage Center  
MoCoWoMen  
Montgomery County BPW  
Montgomery County Commission for Women  
Montgomery County NOW  
Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club  
Montgomery County Young Democrats  
NARAL ProChoice Maryland  
National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Inc., Anne Arundel Chapter  
National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Prince George's County, MD  
North Arundel Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.  
On Our Own of Montgomery County Inc.  
Planned Parenthood of Maryland  
Prince George's County Drug Policy Coalition, Inc.  
The Human Trafficking Prevention Project  
The Law Office of Jessica O'Kane  
The QED Foundation  
White Lion Social  
Women's Equality Day 2020 Celebration Coalition  
Women's Law Center of Maryland