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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB539
Labor and Employment - Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program - Establishment

TO: Chair Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman, and the members of the Finance Committee

FROM: Jeffrey Rubin on behalf of Jews United for Justice

My name is Jeffrey Rubin. I live in Potomac, MD in District 15. I am writing in strong support of SB539 on behalf of Jews United for Justice. JUFJ organizes nearly 5,000 Jewish Marylanders and allies in support of local campaigns for social, racial, and economic justice. Family responsibility, care for the sick, and concern for the needs of the wider community are all important Jewish values. Paid family and medical leave upholds each of these values.

I have two personal stories to share with you.

1) Several years ago my father became very ill when he was living by himself in Florida. I took time off from work, spent one week with him in the hospital, and then brought him back to Maryland for additional medical attention. He required months of around the clock care to recover from his newly diagnosed cancer. I was his primary caregiver. This was an intense, stressful time. It would have been much worse had I not benefited from employer paid family and medical leave. I was able to focus on what it took for my dad to get better, without worrying about job security or income.

2) About six months ago, my daughter gave birth to her first child – and my first grandchild. Fortunately, her employer provided maternity leave that allowed her to take four months off from work without sacrificing pay. I saw firsthand the profound value of this benefit, which enables parents to cope with the life-changing, new challenges of caring for newborns in their early months of life.

We were lucky because our employers provided for us. I believe everyone who works in Maryland should have the benefit of paid family and medical leave. That is why **JUFJ and I respectfully urge a favorable report for SB539.**