

**Hearing Testimony February 27, 2020  
Senate Finance Committee**

**SB 539- Labor and Employment - Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program - Establishment**

**SUPPORT**

Good afternoon madam Chair and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Joan Bevelaqua and I have been an adjunct for over twenty years at a number of community colleges in Maryland. I have been a member of SEIU Local 500 since 2014 when I began working for Collective Bargaining for Adjunct Professors. I am here today to urge you to support SB 539 The Time to Care Act.

It was important for me to tell you my story in hopes that you will see the need for the Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program. Four years ago, I was diagnosed with arthritis in my right hip joint. I put off the surgery for as long as manageable. My only time off from working at multiple colleges is the month break between fall and spring semesters, I teach all summer. My surgery was performed on December 17<sup>th</sup> but I had the unfortunate experience of fracturing my femur two weeks into recovery requiring additional surgery and instructions not to walk on the leg or drive for three months. I had no choice but to cancel my spring semester. This has left me with no income and the fear of not being reinstated since no adjunct has job security. If The Time to Care Act had been law when I was recovering from surgery it would have made a tremendous difference for me and my family. It would have made an already difficult situation much less stressful.

My story is not as tragic as others, I will recover, but knowing I had planned so carefully and still found to be in a circumstance that I had not anticipated makes The Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program more relevant to me and so many other working Marylanders. That is why this committee and the Maryland General Assembly MUST act and pass the Time to Care Act during the 2020 legislative session. I ask that you support SB 539 urge a favorable committee report. Thank you for your time!

Respectfully submitted,  
Joan Bevelaqua  
SEIU Local 500