

Tuesday, February 17, 2021

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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB375/SB211
Labor and Employment - Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program - Establishment
(Time to Care Act of 2021)

TO: Chair Davis, Vice Chair Dumais, and members of the House Economic Matters Committee
FROM: Samantha Blau

My name is Samantha Blau and I am a resident of Baltimore City in the 46th district. I write to you to ask for your support of HB375/SB211, Labor and Employment - Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program Establishment (Time to Care Act of 2021).

I live with an invisible disability, that is, I do not present in public with any limits to how I move about the world. I have two relatively little understood conditions; Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome (POTS), and Small Fiber Neuropathy (SFN). Because medical research has not caught up with diagnostics I am forced to manage my condition by seeing a different specialist for each of my symptoms. I attend several doctor's visits and medical procedures each month. One persistent symptom that cannot be treated is medically known as "brain fog," a condition in which I sometimes have cognitive difficulty due to reduced flow of blood (hypoperfusion) to my brain. Being able to navigate what goes on during these appointments and procedures becomes doubly difficult.

Without the help of my husband as my caregiver I honestly do not know how I would manage the litany of medical appointments. He is lucky enough to be in a position in his career where he can make his own schedule and complete his work around my medical needs. I am lucky enough to have a familial care giver in this position. Legislation cannot cure the chronic conditions that thousands of Marylanders face, but it can at least give many better access to their familial caregivers.

I urge you to support the HB375, Time to Care Act.