



Testimony of American Association of University Women of Maryland

to the

**Maryland General Assembly
House of Delegates Economic Matters Committee**

in support of

**House Bill 375: Labor and Employment – Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program -
Establishment (Time to Care Act of 2021)**

February 16, 2021

Submitted by Roxann King, Vice President, Public Policy

The American Association of University Women of Maryland (AAUW Maryland) strongly supports 2021 HB 375. Founded in 1881, AAUW's approximately 170,000 members and 1,000 branches nationwide are leaders in gender equity research, advocacy, and philanthropy. In Maryland, we have over 4,000 members and supporters and 13 college and university partners. Our Maryland members are strong advocates for laws that promote the well-being of women and children.

Too many Marylanders must choose between work or family when illness strikes, babies arrive or aging or disabled family members require their care. Pre-pandemic, 79% of mothers were in the work force. Women's disproportionate loss of jobs during the pandemic to meet family needs emphasizes how important support is in more normal times for family stressors. When family health crises arrive, women may suffer wage losses to care for family members. The lack of paid family and medical leave leads to economic instability, particularly for women, and contributes to the wage gap between women and men and women's financial vulnerability as they age.

The Time to Care Act of 2021 establishes a Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program that allows employees to take up to 12 weeks of paid leave to care for themselves or their families during family emergencies. This bill builds on the legislation passed in 2018 granting parental leave for state employees and the work of the Task Force to Study Family and Medical Leave Insurance. It has been a legislative priority for the Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women (MLAW) and for AAUW Maryland in both their 2019 and 2020 legislative agendas.

AAUW Maryland urges that you provide a favorable report of HB 375 – the Time to Care Act of 2021.