



Bill No: SB211
Title: Labor and Employment – Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program – Establishment (Time to Care Act of 2021)
Committee: Finance
Hearing: January 28, 2021
Position: SUPPORT

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. **SB211 a priority on the 2021 MLAW Agenda and we urge your support.**

SB211 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. New York, Washington, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Washington D.C. and California have similar programs. Similar legislation was recently signed into law in Connecticut and Oregon. Here in Maryland, this concept builds on legislation that passed in the 2018 Session which established a parental leave benefit for state employees and the work of the Task Force to Study Family and Medical Leave Insurance. The Time to Care Act was introduced in 2019 as HB 341 and SB 500 and in 2020 as HB 839/SB 539 and was a priority on both the 2019 and 2020 MLAW Agendas.

Many Marylanders can't take time to care because they lack paid family leave. The Federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides unpaid leave and job protection to employees who work for businesses that employ 50 or more individuals who need to take up to 12 weeks of leave. In Maryland, even unpaid leave under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act is inaccessible for 56 percent of working people.

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.

Families are dependent on working women. In Maryland, 79% of mothers are in the workforce. Nearly 25% of women take 10 or fewer days of parental leave, potentially putting themselves and their children at risk physically and emotionally. Both women and men are responsible for caregiving for elderly and ill relatives (although this burden disproportionately falls on women).

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The lack of a paid family and medical leave system leads to economic instability, particularly for women, and is also a major contributor to the wage gap between women and men, and women's financial vulnerability as they age. In our 2021 poll, 78% of participants said they "like a lot" the fact that the program would allow women--who are disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic--to take the leave they need without having to worry about their jobs.

For these reasons, MLAW strongly urges the passage of SB211.

MLAW's 2021 Agenda is supported by the following organizations:

AAUW Anne Arundel County
AAUW Easton Branch
AAUW Kensington Rockville Branch
AAUW Kensington-Rockville
American Association of University Women (AAUW) Maryland
Annapolis Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Anne Arundel County NOW
Baltimore County Alumnae Chapter or Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Baltimore Metropolitan Alumnae Chapter Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Baltimore NOW (National Organization for Women)
Bound for Better, advocates for Domestic Violence
Business and Professional Women Maryland
Calvert County Commission for Women
Cambridge Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Charles County Commission for Women
Childway Early Learning Center
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Kappa Phi Chapter
For All Seasons, Inc.
Fort Washington Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Frederick County Alumnae Chapter Delta Sigma Theta Inc
Harford County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Hug Don't Shoot
Human Trafficking Prevention Project, University of Baltimore School of Law
Kappa Psi Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
League of Women Voters of Prince George's County (LWVPGC)
Lee Law, LLC
Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Maryland Justice Project
Maryland NOW
Maryland Women's Heritage Center
Mission 50
MoCoWoMen
Montgomery County Commission for Women
Montgomery County MD Alumnae Chapter Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club
Montgomery County Young Democrats
NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland
National Coalition of 100 Black Women., Inc. Anne Arundel County Chapter
National Coalition of 100 Black Women-Prince George's
North Arundel County Alumnae Chapter-Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Potomac Valley Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Prince George's County Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Prince George's County Drug Policy Coalition, Inc.
Reproductive Justice Inside
Stella's Girls Inc.
The Rest Of A Life (TROAL)
Top Ladies of Distinction
Top Ladies of Distinction, Inc.- Patuxent River Chapter
Top Ladies of Distinction, Prince George's County Chapter
UAW Local 1183
WISE
Women's Equality Day 2020 Celebration Coalition
Women's Law Center of Maryland

Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women

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