



Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children

Testimony in Support of HB 496
“Labor and Employment - Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program -
Establishment”
Submitted to the House Economic Matters Committee
February 15, 2022

FAVORABLE

To: Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, and members of the Economic Matters Committee

The Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children (MDAEYC) supports HB 496, which would establish a Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program that will enable employees to take up to 12 weeks of partially paid leave to care for new children, family members with serious illnesses or disabilities, or themselves.

MDAEYC is a professional association of early childhood educators, allied professionals, and families. We know that early childhood educators, like all workers, need to be able to take time off from work periodically to care for their family members. And the families that educators serve also need paid leave time so that they can care for their infants or ill family members when the need arises.

As early childhood educators, we also know that the earliest years of a child’s life have a profound influence on their development. All infants need and deserve attentive care from a caring adult; providing paid family leave enables more parents the option to provide that attentive care themselves for several weeks or months. Allowing parents more time to care for their infant or newly adopted child helps family members build loving relationships and form attachments. Secure parent-infant attachments are the cornerstone of emotional well-being and healthy relationships. Healthy early relationships allow young children to develop confidence and be ready to learn.

HB 496 would enable workers to provide attentive care to their newborns or ill family members, so employees don’t have to choose between being paid and taking care of a family member. We urge your support of this legislation.

If you have any questions, please contact: Stephanie Schaefer, Program Coordinator, at stephanie.schaefer@mdaeyc.org or 240-441-3280.