



**TESTIMONY FOR HB0375
LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT – FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE INSURANCE PROGRAM –
ESTABLISHMENT (TIME TO CARE ACT OF 2021)**

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Valderrama

Committee: Economic Matters

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0375 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of individuals and grassroots groups with members in every district in the state. We have over 30,000 members across the state.

All of us have been in a position where we had to take leave without pay, or lose vacation time, or put our jobs at risk because of our own illness or medical condition or that of a family member. The struggles of those with loved ones who have a family member who has Covid are even more poignant. Family is important. Health is important. We should not have to choose.

This bill establishes a program that both employees and employers make small contributions to each pay period. Those contributions become a bank of funds that would allow an individual employee take up to 12 weeks of paid leave without causing financial harm to the employer.

Being able to take the time to care for yourself or your loved ones helps everyone in the long term. Because so many people are living paycheck to paycheck these days, this would make many individuals far less likely to go bankrupt over an illness or a medical condition. It would help businesses retain their skills, rather than have them drop out entirely.

This is a problem that has been in need of a solution for a long time. We believe this solution would benefit the state tremendously and would make our state a more attractive place to work.

The Maryland Legislative Coalition supports this bill and we recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in Committee.