

Thank you for having me here today, I'm Rebecca Coppola, an 1199SEIU member and Family Nurse Practitioner in Baltimore.

I'm honored to be testifying about this critical bill, HB 8, to provide my patients and fellow Marylanders paid family and medical leave. We have the opportunity with this bill to do a great good for new families and families facing serious illness. These are situations we all face at some point in our lives, and helping people through times of great change or crisis benefits everyone from patients and employees, to employers and the state.

Too often, we face impossible choices when we have a baby or a health issue in the family.

Do you follow medical advice, stay home, heal, and take care of your loved one?

Or do you go back to work and risk compounded health issues or permanent disability?

This difficult choice hurts people, families, and communities.

Marylanders and their families lose their paycheck, maybe their life savings if they follow the doctor's orders.

Or they go back to work for that needed paycheck and suffer, so that they can pay the bills

Health conditions worsen, making treatment more painful and more expensive down the line.

Working while sick or injured, or while staying up late every night trying to care for a sick loved one is hard.

That's especially the case for many of the essential workers that currently lack paid family and medical leave, such as most healthcare workers, grocery store workers, bus drivers, etc.

Regardless of profession or background, no one in our state should have to make these hard choices. No mom should be going back to work with a 3 week old at home in order to make ends meet.

That's why I respectfully urge you to pass paid family and medical leave legislation without delay.

By ensuring all Marylanders can have paid family and medical leave, you can help people take care of their families and have kids without having to forgo groceries

You can help my patients be able to heal and return to work when they're ready, not just when they have to to make rent.

You can help kids have a brighter future, make our communities healthier and our state stronger.

Thank you.