

To the House Economic Matters Committee:

My name is Tim Carter. I have been an employee of Safeway Stores, Inc. for 38 years. I have been a member of UFCW Local 400 for 38 years as well. I have worked at many stores throughout Maryland and I am currently assigned to Store 3274 at University Town Center in Hyattsville. I am currently the acting Produce Department manager at this location.

In 38 years, I probably called out sick 4 times. Three of those were sick calls and I had to take my wife to the hospital on another occasion. Although I've been blessed with good health, and rarely get sick, there were times, over the years, that I should have called out but pushed myself and consequently put others in danger by spreading my virus or cold. I was concerned that I would lose a day's pay coupled with pride and dedication to my job.

Recently however, within the last two years, I now accrue sick leave. This makes it financially feasible to take a sick day and take care of myself as well as protect others from getting sick. If I am not feeling well, I can use my sick day.

In today's COVID pandemic, it is more important than ever to stay safe, and above all, protect others who have compromised immune systems. It is also important to protect and care for our families in times of need. We work around food and need to do everything possible to protect ourselves, our communities, and our families. Paid Family Sick and Medical Leave allows us to do this.

Thank you, and please vote yest for HB 496.