



Olivia Bartlett, DoTheMostGood Maryland Team

Committee: Economic Matters Committee

Testimony on: HB0496 – Labor and Employment – Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program – Establishment

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: February 15, 2022

Bill Contact: Delegate C. T. Wilson

DoTheMostGood (DTMG) is a progressive grass-roots organization with more than 3000 members in all districts in Montgomery County as well as in several nearby jurisdictions. DTMG supports legislation and activities that keep residents healthy and safe in a clean environment and which promote equity across all our diverse communities. Ensuring that working Marylanders can afford to take leave when they need time to care for family members or themselves meets these criteria.

HB0496 will establish 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 member with serious health conditions or disabilities or themselves if they have a serious health condition, or a military service member who is next-of-kin or has a specified need because of the military deployment of a family member. Benefits range up to 90 percent of the employee's average weekly wage, depending on the employee's income.

A recent survey found that 88 percent of Marylanders support paid leave. Federal employees already can take 12 weeks of paid parental leave per year, and Maryland State employees can take 60 days of paid parental leave during the first six months after birth or adoption. This bill extends these benefits to all employees.

Paid family and medical leave in Maryland will mean an employee will not have to choose between their job and family, employers will help keep qualified workers in the labor force, and employee turnover will be reduced.

Marylanders need a paid family and medical leave program that

- will be affordable for all -- with employers contributing at least as much as employees
- will cover all working people equally regardless of gender or type of family
- will be available for all the reasons that people need it
- will provide up to 12 weeks of substantially paid leave
- will protect workers against job loss for taking leave

Therefore, DTMG is an active member of the state-wide Time To Care Coalition and strongly supports HB0496. We urge a **FAVORABLE** report on this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

Olivia Bartlett
Co-lead, DoTheMostGood Maryland Team
oliviabartlett@verizon.net
240-751-5599