



**BILL NO:** House Bill 988  
**TITLE:** Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program – Modifications  
**COMMITTEE:** Economic Matters  
**HEARING DATE:** March 7, 2023  
**POSITION:** **SUPPORT**

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The Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV) is the state domestic violence coalition that brings together victim service providers, allied professionals, and concerned individuals for the common purpose of reducing intimate partner and family violence and its harmful effects on our citizens. **MNADV urges the House Economic Matters Committee to issue a favorable report on HB 988.**

Domestic violence and economic instability are inextricably linked. While economic stress does not cause the power and control dynamics of domestic violence it can exacerbate the violence. In addition, many victims of domestic violence lack the financial stability and resources to leave an unhealthy or violent relationship and pursue safety. MNADV supports measures that promote economic justice and would enable victims of domestic violence to achieve financial independence such as affordable childcare, paid sick leave, and educational opportunities. Access to Paid Family Leave increases protective factors and economic support for women, which in turn lowers their risk factors for Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), and any reduction in the prevalence of IPV improves the safety and public health of all Marylanders.<sup>1</sup>

Passing the Time to Care Act of 2022 last legislative session was a historic victory for all Marylanders - and it was just the first step in realizing Paid Family and Medical Leave in Maryland. The critical work to create and implement an accessible, equitable, and robust FAML program is the next major step in fulfilling the promise of the Time to Care Act of 2022, and the General Assembly still has a key role to play in this collective effort. Passing HB 988 with the sponsor amendments will set important parameters for the FAML program, putting the program firmly on the path toward successful implementation.

House Bill 988 sets the contribution rate for the program with a cost-sharing split of 50% employees, 50% employers. This is fundamentally important, as it keeps the program affordable and equitable for both employers and employees in Maryland. A 50/50 cost-sharing split is in line with most other states - including our neighboring state of Delaware - that have recently passed FAML programs. Maryland passed one of the strongest and most comprehensive FAML

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<sup>1</sup> D'Inverno, Ashley Schappell;Reidy, Dennis E. and Kearns, Megan C. (2018). Preventing Intimate Partner Violence through Paid Parental Leave Policies. Prev Med. 114:18-23. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0091743518301804>

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programs in the country, and this sponsor amendment to create a 50/50 cost-sharing split is of the utmost importance to ensure our program centers the needs of both employees and employers, continuing to set the bar as a national model.

For the above stated reasons, the **Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence** urges a **favorable report on HB 988**.