

Good day, Delegates Qi, Embry, and R. Lewis! My name is Sharon Long and I live in Fort Washington, MD. I strongly **SUPPORT HB0988**, which modifies the Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI) Program by specifying various aspects of programmatic implementation, administration, and the cost-sharing split. Cost-sharing for HB0988 should be **50-50** between employers and employees, same position as the House bill.

Two years ago, I spoke in SUPPORT of the Time to Care Act. I'm back again to continue voicing my support in hopes of getting what is now HB0988 all the way over the finish line. I have multiple sclerosis, or MS, (a disease of the brain, optic nerves, and spine) and it significantly impacts my ability to walk and stand on a daily basis. I use it as a "superpower" to think "outside the box" to get things done. Regardless of how challenging my MS is, I have not missed a day of work because of it. I remain a contributing member of society- working full-time, paying taxes, going to church, and volunteering in both my MS and general communities.

The point of this legislation is what "**Could**" happen health-wise. MS is **unpredictable**. **Bills aren't!** Just like you get yours, I get mine and pay them. Bills don't care if I'm well or sick. I also factor in my parents who are in their mid-80s. Thankfully, their health is stable, but **Any** of us could have a health event requiring my taking time off from work.

As a full-time employee, who helped support my organization successfully through the recent pandemic, I would hope that such loyalty from myself and other loyal, hardworking employees would be manifested in a 50-50 split of HB0988.

Thanks for your consideration and I strongly urge a **FAVORABLE** report on **HB0988** with the sponsor amendments. Loyalty should count for something!