

March 3, 2023

The Honorable C.T. Wilson
House Economic Matters Committee
House Office Building, Room 231
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: HB988 – Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program – Modifications

Dear Chairman Wilson:

The Allegany County Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests the Economic Matters Committee give an **Unfavorable Report** to **HB988 – Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program – Modifications**.

Employers in Western Maryland are facing major challenges, not altogether different from those faced across the whole State of Maryland. Workforce accountability is just one of many issues that has contributed to increased costs related to doing business. As it relates to HB988, medical leave for employees with such an unreasonably long notification period, including filing, decision, appealing, and final decision will only contribute to further strains on our employers.

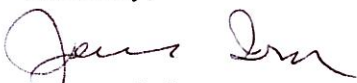
The existing language, which does not require an employee to exhaust their own vacation and sick time creates an extremely unfair situation for businesses who otherwise can estimate paid time off of their employees, no matter the size of the organization or situation. Allowance for concurrency is requested. Additionally, the language recognizes a wide range of “family” including domestic partner, which the state of Maryland very broadly defines.

The Allegany County Chamber of Commerce does not disagree with the spirit of this bill in trying to create opportunities for families to adjust to a wide variety of health and human changes that we all will face. However, as outlined above, there are specific areas of this bill that will only add to the challenges our small businesses are facing today.

Finally, we are disappointed that the Senate will amend their bill to match the House with a 50/50 split. It was our hope that the House might instead move to match the 25/75 split proposed in the Senate bill. Not only does this additional expense hurt employers, but employees will also need to concede a portion of their pay to support this program. The Allegany County Chamber of Commerce **opposes** House Bill 988.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Jeremy G. Irons
Legislative Committee Chair



Juli R. McCoy
Executive Director

cc: Honorable Brian M. Crosby, Vice Chair, House Economic Matters Committee
House Economic Matters Committee Members
Allegany County Delegation