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**Written Testimony Submitted to the Maryland House Appropriations Committee
HB 52 - State Employees - Parental Bereavement Leave
January 30, 2024**

SUPPORT

Good afternoon Chair Barnes and members of the Appropriations Committee. AFT-MD strongly supports HB 52 - Parental Bereavement Leave for State Employees. The introduction of this legislation is a significant step towards acknowledging and addressing the unique challenges faced by State employees during times of personal tragedy and loss.

Parental Bereavement Leave, as defined in the legislation, is a crucial provision that recognizes the emotional toll of losing a child or experiencing a stillbirth. It establishes a compassionate framework that allows State employees the necessary time to grieve and cope with their loss without the added stress of financial concerns.

The legislation's application to all employees, including temporary employees, underscores the commitment of the legislation to support employees during these difficult times. This financial assistance ensures that individuals can focus on their emotional well-being without the additional burden of financial strain.

The specific allowance of up to 10 days of Parental Bereavement Leave within 60 days after the death of an employee's child or a stillbirth is a reasonable and considerate timeframe. This acknowledges the immediate need for support while providing flexibility for employees to navigate their grieving process.

In conclusion, I urge the committee to support and pass HB 52, recognizing the importance of acknowledging the profound impact of parental bereavement on the lives of State employees. This compassionate and inclusive approach aligns with the values of empathy, fairness, and support for the well-being of our state workforce. Thank you.

