

TESTIMONY ON HB 571
FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE INSURANCE PROGRAM - MODIFICATIONS

House Economic Matters Committee

February 14, 2024

Submitted by Christopher Cano, Director of Political & Legislative Affairs
On behalf of SEIU Local 500

Dear Chair Wilson and Members of the Economic Matters Committee:

SEIU Local 500 supports HB 571, which modifies the Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI) program by specifying various aspects of programmatic implementation, including the administration and enforcement of the Time to Care Law.

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 implement and administer an accessible, equitable, and robust FAMLI program is the next major step in fulfilling the promise of the Time to Care Act of 2022. We are excited by the work of the new FAMLI division at the Department of Labor, and we believe passing HB 571 establishes important administrative parameters for the Department that will set the program firmly on the path toward successful implementation.

Notably, HB 571 requests a delay of the implementation timeline, moving contributions to July 1, 2025 and benefits to July 1, 2026. The members of SEIU Local 500 are eager for Marylanders to have access to paid leave that the FAMLI program will provide as soon as possible, and we also want the program to be robustly accessible and functional. We understand the Department of Labor needs the additional time to build the systems necessary to accept contributions, claims, and pay out benefits, and thus the members of SEIU Local 500 support the delay proposed in HB 571.

We appreciate your consideration and support for HB 571.