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HB0949

February 28, 2024

TO: Members of the House Appropriations Committee

FROM: Nina Themelis, Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations

RE: House Bill 949 – State Employees - Cancer Screening Leave

POSITION: FAVORABLE

Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Change, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** House Bill (HB) 949.

HB 949 allows all state employees – including part-time and temporary employees – to take up to four hours of paid cancer screening leave during a 12-month period, as long as they receive approval from the appropriate authority. This bill was modeled after Baltimore City's employee Cancer Screening Program, which has allowed City employees these same permissions for nearly two decades.ⁱ Timely routine cancer screenings are important for detecting cancer and precancerous cells early, allowing for prompt treatment that helps prevent cancer deaths.ⁱⁱ

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Maryland (second to heart disease). The state has a higher cancer incidence rate than the country as a whole, meaning we see higher number of new cancer cases per capita annually.ⁱⁱⁱ The cancers that most commonly lead to deaths in Maryland are lung cancer, breast cancer (among women), and prostate cancer (among men).^{iv} When detected early through routine, preventive screenings, cancer can be more effectively treated and lives can be saved.ⁱⁱ Baltimore City's cancer screening program for employees supports our population in seeking important preventive care and living longer, healthier lives. Modeling a State policy based on our proven, effective local policy will enable our State workforce to do the same.

For these reasons, the BCA respectfully requests a **favorable** report on HB 949.

ⁱ Baltimore City. (2018). Administrative Manual AM 203-4-1. Retrieved from <https://bbmr.baltimorecity.gov/sites/default/files/upload/AM-203-4-1.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Ma Z, Richardson LC. Cancer Screening Prevalence and Associated Factors Among US Adults. *Prev Chronic Dis* 2022;19:220063. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5888/pcd19.220063>

ⁱⁱⁱ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023). National Center for Health Statistics: Maryland. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/states/maryland/md.htm>

^{iv} Maryland Department of Health. (2021). 2021 Cancer Data. Retrieved from https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/cancer/Documents/2021%20CRF%20Cancer%20Report_FINAL.pdf