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Patrick Moran – President

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**HB 1503 – State Personnel – Paid Family and Medical Leave  
Appropriations Committee  
March 12, 2025**

**Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENT**

AFSCME Maryland Council 3 represents 50,000 state, county, and municipal employees. We strongly support paid family leave as it ensures workers can take the time they need to care for themselves or their loved ones without the fear of losing their income. We are proud to have reached an agreement with the Department of Budget and Management to extend this benefit to members covered under our state contract.

To better align with the intent of the General Assembly in the FAMILI Act, we propose the following amendment: employees should not be required to exhaust their leave before utilizing benefits under the state's paid family leave program – See [MD Labor and Employment Code § 8.3-702 \(d\)\(1\)](#).

**AFSCME Amendment to HB 1503:**

**Pg. 8: Line 23, ADD (D):**

**(D) A covered individual may not be required to use or exhaust paid vacation, paid sick leave, or other paid time off before, or while, receiving benefits under this title.**

Paid leave policies are good for workers and employers. We urge the committee to provide a favorable with amendment report on HB 1503.

Thank you for your consideration.

The following states that have collective bargaining for state employees, AK, CA, CT, DC, DE, HI, IL, ME, MN, NE, NJ, NM, NV, OH, OR, PA, MT, RI, WA have a terminal point for negotiations, either binding interest arbitration, the right to strike, or a legislative process. These processes create a level playing field for both parties.

This legislation would create a mutual incentive to compel parties to reach an agreement around collective bargaining negotiations by instilling a binding interest arbitration process, whereby if the two sides cannot come to agreement through negotiations by a specified deadline the proposals.

From the two sides would be presented to a professional, neutral third- party arbitrator – hearing from witnesses and experts, with data and evidence – for consideration of all the facts involved with the purpose of determining which proposal is most appropriate to implement. The choice by the arbitrator would then be considered a binding resolution to be implemented by the Governor and exclusive bargaining representative for whatever appropriations are necessary to implement and fund the memorandum of understanding. The budgetary powers of the Maryland General Assembly remain unaltered.

SB 188 is a strong and positive step toward enhancing fairness, balance, and efficiency, and resolution. It follows a model that is well-established in other states and among Maryland counties. We urge a favorable report.

