

# Memorandum In Opposition to SB 355 – Senator Hershey

---

Senate Finance Committee

February 5, 2025

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network is the nonprofit nonpartisan advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society. ACS CAN empowers cancer patients, survivors, their families and other experts on the disease, amplifying their voices and public policy matters that are relevant to the cancer community at all levels of government. We support evidence-based policy and legislative solutions designed to eliminate cancer as a major health problem. On behalf of our constituents, many of whom have been personally affected by cancer, we oppose SB 355.

It is estimated that in 2025 alone, 37,200 Marylanders will be diagnosed with cancer. We know that cancer treatment is costly and time consuming. Cancer patients and their caregivers often miss work due to:

- Ongoing doctors' visits throughout treatment
- Chemotherapy, radiation and/or surgery
- Time needed to recover from symptoms or effects of treatment.

Between 2017 and 2019, ACS CAN conducted multiple surveys to explore the issue of paid leave among cancer patients, survivors, and caregivers. The majority of respondents reported facing a financial burden due to a lack of paid leave. Fifty percent of cancer patients, 34% of cancer survivors, and 48% of caregivers reported financial problems after missing work or reducing work hours to access treatment or tend to their loved ones.

On the other hand, individuals with paid family and medical leave were less likely to report experiencing financial problems while seeking cancer treatment. Additionally, studies have shown that cancer patients who have paid leave have higher rates of job retention.

Access to paid family and medical leave makes a critical difference for people facing a cancer diagnosis – leading to improved outcomes and better quality of life. *Respondents that used paid leave were nearly 50% more likely to complete their treatment, 46% more likely to attend doctor or treatment appointments, and 43% more likely to manage their symptoms or side effects.*

**Patients/Survivors**

% Positive Impact – Used/Didn’t Use Paid Medical/Family Leave	Have Paid Leave & Used It (27%)	Have Paid Leave But Didn’t Use It (24%)
<b>Being able to complete your treatment</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>Your doctor or treatment appointments</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>31%</b>
<b>Managing your symptoms or side effects</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>The decisions you made about which treatments to receive or where to receive them</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>23%</b>
<b>Affording your treatments</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>The number of different treatment options to which you had access</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>21%</b>

ACS CAN applauded the Maryland General Assembly in 2022 for addressing the need for paid family and medical leave. Cancer never stops, and the need for paid family and medical leave hasn’t stopped either.

ACS CAN thanks the Chair and committee for the opportunity to testify and urges an unfavorable report of SB 355.