

Senate Bill 58

Date: January 29, 2025

Committee: Senate Finance

Position: **Opposed**

Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce (Maryland Chamber) is a statewide coalition of more than 7,000 members and federated partners working to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic growth and opportunity for all Marylanders.

In addition to the substantial amount of leave that Maryland's employers must already require; Senate Bill 58 (SB 58) would require employers to provide additional paid leave to employees for parental engagement purposes. The Maryland Chamber appreciates the sponsor's intent, but the bill would create an additional burden on Maryland's employers that will impede the State's need to incentivize economic growth that leads to more economic opportunities for residents.

The data is clear, Maryland is struggling to incentivize the creation of new businesses, retain existing businesses, and create economic opportunities for the State's residents. Since 2019, Maryland has had the 6th fewest new business applications of any state, and as a direct result of that poor economic growth, Maryland ranked 49th in job growth in 2024. As such, Maryland must take action to grow the State's economy and avoid statutory requirements like SB 58 that place additional financial and operation burdens on employers.

Under current law, Maryland's employers are already required to provide sick and safe leave, jury and witness duty leave, and voting leave in addition to leave regarding organ and bone marrow donation, volunteering, and parental bonding. In 2022, Maryland enacted the Time to Care Act, which established the paid family and medical leave insurance (FAMLI) law that has yet to be fully implemented by the Maryland Department of Labor. At minimum, Maryland should wait to determine the full impact that the FAMLI law has on both employers and employees before enacting additional leave requirements.

Maryland must take immediate and decisive action to promote economic expansion and avoid placing additional burdens on employers that ultimately limit economic opportunity and job growth. SB 58 would place additional financial constraints on businesses and create operation burdens at a time when Maryland should be incentivizing economic growth. **For these reasons, the Maryland Chamber respectfully opposes SB 58.**