



Testimony on behalf of the Greater Bethesda Chamber of Commerce

*In Opposition to
Senate Bill 58—Labor and Engagement—Parental School Engagement Leave Act
January 29, 2025
Senate Finance Committee*

The Greater Bethesda Chamber of Commerce (GBCC) was founded in 1926. Since then, the organization has grown to more than 600 businesses located throughout the Greater Bethesda area and beyond. On behalf of these members, we appreciate the opportunity to provide written comments in opposition to Senate Bill 58— Labor and Employment—Parental School Engagement Leave Act.

Senate Bill 58 requires employers to provide employees with at least twelve hours of parental school engagement leave each school year to attend meetings and conferences related to the schooling of the employee's child. While we appreciate the intent of this bill, we are opposed, in large part, because of the financial impact to businesses. Businesses already comply with a number of paid leave requirements, including state and local paid sick and safe leave requirements. Additionally, Maryland's paid family leave program, FAMILI, is about to go into effect, the cost of which will be borne by both employers and employees. We believe businesses should have the ability, beyond what is already required, to determine what benefits to provide for their employees. Most businesses already give flexibility to employees to use their paid leave as they see fit. We do not support mandating such specific paid leave requirements, especially when they don't impact all employees equally.

For this reason, we respectfully request an unfavorable vote on Senate Bill 58.