

## **SB58\_BranndonJackson\_FAV**

Uploaded by: Branndon Jackson

Position: FAV

**Testimony in Support of the Parental School Engagement Leave Act**  
**Senator Joanne C. Benson**  
**SB058**

Good afternoon, Chair Pamela Beidle, Vice Chair Anthon Hayes, and esteemed members of the Finance Legislative Body/Committee.

My name is Brannndon Jackson, and I am a concerned parent and community advocate. Here, to express my enthusiastic support for the Parental School Engagement Leave Act. This critical piece of legislation aims to empower parents and guardians to actively participate in their children's education by giving them the necessary leave to attend school-related activities.

**The Importance of Parental Engagement:**

1. **Academic Success:** Numerous studies have shown that parental involvement is key to a child's academic success. According to research from the National Education Association (NEA), students with engaged parents are more likely to earn higher grades, attend school regularly, and graduate. The Parental School Engagement Leave Act ensures that parents have the opportunity to be present during pivotal moments in their children's academic journey.
2. **Behavior and Attitude:** Engaged parents positively influence their children's behavior and attitudes toward school. A report from the Harvard Family Research Project found that children with involved parents exhibit better social skills, improved behavior, and a greater sense of responsibility. By granting parents leave to participate in school activities, we are fostering a supportive and collaborative learning environment.
3. **Bridging Gaps:** The act addresses the barriers faced by working parents who struggle to balance their professional responsibilities with their desire to be involved in their children's education. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that over 60% of families have both parents working. Providing dedicated leave for school engagement activities will help bridge the gap, allowing parents to be present without fear of job-related repercussions.

**Key Provisions of the Act:**

- **Leave Entitlement:** Parents and guardians shall be entitled to a specified number of hours per year of paid or unpaid leave to participate in school-related activities, including parent-teacher conferences, school events, and volunteer opportunities.
- **Eligibility:** The leave shall be available to all parents and guardians of school-aged children, regardless of their employment status, ensuring inclusivity and equal access.
- **Flexibility:** Employers shall provide reasonable flexibility in scheduling leave to accommodate the diverse needs of families and the varying schedules of school events.

**Personal Experience:**

As a parent, I have personally experienced the challenges of balancing work commitments with my desire to be actively involved in my child's education. The Parental School Engagement Leave Act would have provided me with the assurance and support needed to attend important school functions without the stress of navigating work schedules. This legislation is not just a policy change; it is a lifeline for families striving to be more engaged in their children's academic lives.

In conclusion, the Parental School Engagement Leave Act is a vital step towards creating a more equitable and supportive educational system. By supporting this act, we are investing in the future of our children, strengthening family bonds, and promoting a culture of collaboration between schools and families. I urge you to vote in favor of this legislation and make a meaningful difference in the lives of our community's families.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully, Brannndon Jackson, Chair for Prince George's County School Board and A Caring Parent. Sincer

**Sincerely,**

**Brannndon Jackson**

# **SB 58 MSPA letter of support.pdf**

Uploaded by: Laura Grubb

Position: FAV

Senator Pamela Beidle  
Senator Antonio Hayes  
Finance Committee  
3 East Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Bill: SB 58 – Labor and Employment - Parental School Engagement Leave Act**  
**Position: Support**

Dear Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and Members of the Committee:


I am writing on behalf of the Maryland School Psychologists' Association (MSPA), a professional organization representing about 500 Maryland school psychologists. We advocate for the social-emotional, behavioral, and academic wellbeing of students and families across the state. School psychologists play a vital role in school communities. Our key mandated responsibilities include implementing and adhering to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (504), among others, to ensure all children can access a free and appropriate public education. The laws governing these processes require parental participation of different types. For IDEA, for example, parents must be present at certain meetings or waive their right to attend. Parent involvement is critical to uphold letter and spirit of these laws.

Although families have a right to these processes, participating fully in them comes at a cost for some parents. As most people may know, parenting a child with a disability can require substantial time and resources. As many people may *not* know, being an involved parent for a child with significant disabilities can involve frequent and sudden time off work to collaborate with school teams and respond to unexpected situations. [Research](#) confirms that nearly a third of parents of children with disabilities report changing jobs or significantly changing their schedule because of child-care / schooling needs. Worse, the odds of experiencing job instability doubled-to-tripled for parents of students with behavioral challenge. In practice, this levies an unwritten cost to parental participation - a cost that rises dramatically if your child is significantly impacted by disability. Parental difficulties maintaining employment, in turn, can trigger other difficulties (with housing, access to food, ability to maintain insurance coverage) that raise the risk of adverse outcomes for the whole family. For all families, [research](#) supports the connection between parental involvement in their children's schooling and positive developmental outcomes as well as healthy school environments.

To mitigate this hidden cost that threatens family stability, and enhance positive outcomes for all students, MSPA supports Senate Bill 58 - Parental School Engagement Leave Act. Senate Bill 58 requires employers to grant 12 hours of paid leave for parents to attend school events. This bill would therefore help soften the employment instability cost of being an involved parent for a child with disabilities. For all parents, it would support their involvement activities that are vital to schooling such as parent teacher conferences, student support team meetings, school wide programs that seek to strengthen ties between schools and surrounding communities such as positive behavior intervention and supports (PBIS) committee meetings, school assemblies, and events related to community schools.

Thus, for the above reasons, MSPA urges a favorable report on SB 58. If we can provide any further information or be of any assistance, please contact us at [legislative@mspaonline.org](mailto:legislative@mspaonline.org) or Sarah Peters at [speters@hbstrategies.us](mailto:speters@hbstrategies.us) or 410-322-2320.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laura M. Grubb PhD". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Laura M. Grubb, PhD, BCBA-D, LBA

On behalf of the MSPA Legislative Committee

# **eactestimony2025.SB58.pdf**

Uploaded by: Leslie Margolis

Position: FAV

# Education Advocacy Coalition

for Students with Disabilities

## **SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

### **SENATE BILL 58: LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT—PARENTAL SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT LEAVE ACT**

**DATE: January 29, 2025**

**POSITION: SUPPORT**

The Education Advocacy Coalition for Students with Disabilities (EAC), a coalition of nearly 50 organizations and individuals concerned with education policy for students with disabilities in Maryland, strongly supports Senate Bill 58, which would require employers to provide at least 12 hours of paid parental engagement leave each school year to employees. This bill would be helpful to all parents but would particularly benefit parents of children with disabilities by enabling them to attend their children's Individualized Education Program (IEP) and other special education-related meetings. Although these meetings must be held at a time and place convenient for parents and school staff, the meetings occur during school hours, and parents must use precious leave time hours or, if they are called to frequent meetings for their child or do not have leave time, risk losing their jobs in order to attend these meetings. Federal and state special education laws impose requirements on school systems to involve parents in their children's IEP meetings, including, but not limited to, provision of advance notice of meetings, provision of interpreters for meetings if needed, and documentation of efforts to reach parents who have not responded to meeting notices. When parents are unable to secure leave time from work to participate in these meetings, whether in-person or virtual, these rights can feel illusory.

Senate Bill 58 recognizes that the involvement of parents in their child's education is of prime importance, and if enacted, would enable parents of children with disabilities to participate more fully in their children's education. For these reasons, the EAC offers strong support for this bill.

Please contact Leslie Seid Margolis, Education Advocacy Coalition co-chairperson, [lesliem@disabilityrightsmd.org](mailto:lesliem@disabilityrightsmd.org) or 443-692-2505 with any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

Selene A. Almazan, Selene Almazan Law, LLC

Rene Averit Sanzone, The Parents' Place of Maryland

Linda Barton, MSED, Education Consultant

Beth Benevides, Autism Society of Maryland, Education Advocacy Coalition Co-Chairperson

Melanie Carlos, xMinds (Partnership for Extraordinary Minds)

Stephanie Carr, S.L. Carr Educational Consultants, LLC

Education Advocacy Coalition Testimony: SB 58

January 29, 2025

Page Two

Ellen A. Callegary, Attorney (Retired)

Rich Ceruolo, Parent

Michelle Davis, M.Ed., ABCs for Life Success

Lisa Frank and Andrea Bennett, Special Kids Company

Marjorie Guldán and Rosemary Kitzinger, Bright Futures, LLC

Riya Gupta, Strong Schools Maryland

Beth Ann Hancock, Charting the Course, LLC

Leilani Hardy, Maryland Coalition of Families

Kalman Hettleman, Independent Advocate

Morgan Durand Horvath, M.Ed., Abilities Network

Rachel London, Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

Leslie Seid Margolis, Disability Rights Maryland, Education Advocacy Coalition Co-Chairperson

Mark Martin, Law Offices of Mark B. Martin, P.A.

Monica Martinez, Martinez Advocacy

Beth Nolan, Education Team Allies

Sumaiya Olatunde, H2D Counseling

Ellen O'Neill, Atlantic Seaboard Dyslexia Education Center

Ronza Othman, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland

Kate Raab and Nicole Joseph, Law Office of Nicole Joseph

Rebecca Rienzi, Pathfinders for Autism

Jaime E. Seaton, BGS Law, LLC

Karleen Spitulnik and Winifred Winston, Decoding Dyslexia Maryland

Ronnetta Stanley, M.Ed., Loud Voices Together

Wayne Steedman, Steedman Law Group, LLC

Guy Stephens, Alliance Against Seclusion and Restraint

Maureen van Stone, Genevieve Hornik, Kendall Eaton, Project HEAL at Kennedy Krieger Institute

Liz Zogby, Maryland Down Syndrome Advocacy Coalition

Also joining testimony: Maryland Education Coalition

# **DRMtestimony2025.SB58.pdf**

Uploaded by: Logan Ewing

Position: FAV



Empowering People to Lead Systemic Change

1500 Union Ave., Suite 2000, Baltimore, MD 21211

Phone: 410-727-6352 | Fax: 410-727-6389

DisabilityRightsMD.org

## SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

### SENATE BILL 58: LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT—PARENTAL SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT LEAVE ACT

DATE: January 29, 2025

POSITION: SUPPORT

Disability Rights Maryland (DRM) is the Protection and Advocacy agency for Maryland. Part of a national network of similar organizations, DRM is federally mandated to advance the civil rights of people with disabilities. DRM strongly support Senate Bill 58, which would require *employers to provide at least 12 hours of paid parental engagement leave each school year to employees*. This bill would make a tremendous difference for parents of children with disabilities by enabling them to more easily attend their children's Individualized Education Program (IEP) and other special education-related meetings. As noted in the testimony of the Education Advocacy Coalition (EAC) in support of Senate Bill 58, these meetings must be held at a time and place convenient for parents and school staff. However, the meetings occur during school hours, and parents must use precious leave time hours or, if they are called to frequent meetings for their child or do not have leave time, risk losing their jobs in order to attend these meetings. DRM has represented many children whose parents give up their lunch hours or break time in order to attend IEP meetings for their children. Recently, we have attended IEP meetings that have had to end earlier than planned because the parent, who was logging in remotely to the meeting during his break time, was being ordered by his employer to return to work. When parents have such time constrictions, additional meetings need to be held; the child's ability to obtain appropriate educational and related services and an appropriate placement can be delayed as a result.

Senate Bill 58 would go a long way towards addressing this problem by enabling parents of children with disabilities to receive paid leave to participate more effectively in the special education process.

Please contact Leslie Seid Margolis at [lesliem@disabilityrightsmd.org](mailto:lesliem@disabilityrightsmd.org) or 443-692-2505 with any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

Logan Ewing  
Staff Attorney

Leslie Seid Margolis  
Managing Attorney and Policy Counsel

## **SB58\_SponsorTestimony**

Uploaded by: Senator Benson

Position: FAV

JOANNE C. BENSON  
Legislative District 24  
Prince George's County

MAJORITY WHIP

Budget and Taxation Committee

Education, Business and  
Administration Subcommittee

Pensions Subcommittee

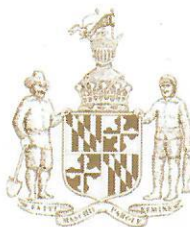
*Joint Committees*

Audit and Evaluation Committee

Children, Youth, and Families

Ending Homelessness

Fair Practices and  
State Personnel Oversight



## THE SENATE OF MARYLAND

### ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

James Senate Office Building  
11 Bladen Street, Room 201  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3148 • 301-858-3148  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3148  
Fax 410-841-3149 • 301-858-3149  
Joanne.Benson@senate.state.md.us

### Testimony of Senator C. Benson SB58 Labor and Employment Parental School Engagement Leave Act

Good afternoon, Chair Pamela Beidle, Vice Chair Anthony Hayes, and esteemed members of the committee,

I am Senator Joanne C. Benson, and I am here today to express my unwavering support for the Labor and Employment Parental School Engagement Leave Act. This legislation is inspired by the Parental Engagement Act of Illinois and aims to ensure that employed parents and guardians could engage in their children's education without the constraints of work conflicts.

#### Importance of Parental Engagement

Parental involvement is the cornerstone of a strong educational system. When parents are actively engaged in their children's education, it leads to better academic outcomes and overall student success. However, many working parents face challenges in attending important school meetings and conferences due to their work schedules. This Act seeks to address these challenges by providing parents with the necessary approved time off of 24 hours of personal to participate in their children's educational activities.

#### Key Provisions of the Act

The Labor and Employment Parental School Engagement Leave Act includes the following key provisions:

1. **Eligibility:** Employed parents and guardians who have worked for at least six consecutive months and meet certain criteria will be eligible for leave to attend school-related activities.
2. **Leave Entitlement:** Eligible parents will be entitled to a reasonable amount of leave during the school year to attend necessary educational or behavioral conferences at their children's schools.
3. **Employer Obligations:** Employers are required to provide this leave without penalty to the employee, ensuring that parents can participate in their children's education without fear of job loss or disciplinary action.
4. **Annual Evaluation:** The State Department of Education will hire an independent contractor to conduct an annual evaluation of the program's effectiveness, ensuring continuous improvement and accountability.

#### Conclusion

In conclusion, the Labor and Employment Parental School Engagement Leave Act is a vital step towards fostering stronger connections between parents and schools. By providing parents with the time, they need to engage in their children's education, we are investing in the future success of our students and the overall well-being of our communities. I urge the committee to support this important legislation by giving a favorable report.

# **HB0058. The Arc and Maryland DD Council. SWC.pdf**

Uploaded by: Ande Kolp

Position: FWA



**Senate Finance Committee**

**SB 58: Labor and Employment- Parental School Engagement Leave Act**

**January 29, 2025**

**Position: Support with Caveat**

The Arc Maryland and Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council (Council) are statewide organizations that work to protect and advance the rights and quality of life of people with disabilities. As such, we support the intent of SB 58 to require employers of 50 or more employees to provide at least 12 hours of paid parental engagement leave each school year. This leave allows an employee to attend school meetings and conferences for the employee's child.

SB 58 helps all parents, but particularly benefits parents of children with disabilities by enabling them to attend their children's Individualized Education Program (IEP), 504 Plan meetings, or other special education-related meetings. Although these meetings are typically scheduled at a time and place convenient for parents and school staff, the meetings are most often held during the work day, requiring parents and guardians to take time off from work to attend. Parents of children who have more frequent meetings for their education planning, accommodations, and interventions must take additional leave, take leave without pay, or risk losing their jobs for chronic absenteeism.

**We appreciate that SB 58 recognizes that parental involvement in a child's education is important to the child's success. We also understand the current fiscal problems Maryland faces, and the difficult budget decisions ahead. They must be considered in concert with the creation of this new leave opportunity.**

Medicaid providers, including those that provide services to people with developmental disabilities through the DDA, typically employ 50 or more employees, and would be mandated to provide Parental School Engagement Leave under this Act. As Medicaid providers, they rely on State and Federal funding. Unlike other businesses, they are prohibited from passing on cost increases to the people they support. Requiring an additional 12 hours of leave increases the costs to these Medicaid providers at a time where State and Federal funding is threatened. Any new mandate for leave programs, without an accompanying mandate for an increase in annual funding for Medicaid providers may have consequences for the people with disabilities they support.

For more information, please contact:

Ande Kolp, Executive Director, The Arc Maryland [akolp@thearcmd.org](mailto:akolp@thearcmd.org)

Rachel London, Executive Director, Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council,  
[RLondon@md-council.org](mailto:RLondon@md-council.org)

# **HCCC\_SB58\_UNFAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Andrew Griffin

Position: UNF



January 29, 2025

Legislative Position: Unfavorable  
Senate Bill 58  
Labor and Employment - Parental School Engagement Leave Act  
Senate Finance Committee

Dear Chairwoman Beidle and members of the committee:

Founded in 1969, the Howard Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to helping businesses—from sole proprietors to large international firms—grow and succeed. With the power of 700 members that encompass more than 170,000 employees, the Howard County Chamber is an effective partner with elected officials and advocates for the interests of the county's business community.

As introduced, Senate Bill 58 (SB 58) would require employers to provide additional paid leave to employees for parental engagement purposes. SB 58 would create additional costs and burden on Maryland's employers by layering another paid leave program on top of what the state already requires. SB 58 creates another challenge to the Governor's economic growth agenda to spur Maryland's economy.

As Maryland struggles to incentivize the creation of new businesses, retain existing businesses, and create economic opportunities for the State's residents, SB 58 stands to create another cost hurdle to achieving that end. Since 2019, Maryland has had the 5th fewest new business applications of any state, and as a direct result of that poor economic growth, Maryland ranked 44th in job growth in 2024. As such, Maryland must take action to grow the State's economy.

Maryland currently requires employers 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 promote economic expansion and avoid placing additional burdens on employers. **We respectfully request an unfavorable report on SB 58.**

Sincerely,

Kristi Simon  
President & CEO  
Howard County Chamber of Commerce

# **2025 GBCC SB 58 Paid Leave School Engagement.pdf**

Uploaded by: Ashlie Bagwell

Position: UNF



## **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.

# **SB 0058 – Parental School Engagement Leave Act - O**

Uploaded by: Danna Blum

Position: UNF



Date: January 15, 2025

Finance Committee  
Senator Pamela Beidle  
3 East  
Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Re: SB 0058 – Parental School Engagement Leave Act - Oppose**

Dear Senator Beidle:

SB 0058 would provide *at least* 12 hours of PAID parental school engagement leave each school year, over and above any other type of leave provided. This would apply to employers with 50 or more employees.

Currently, Maryland has upwards of 8 (or more) laws requiring leave (both paid and unpaid). This is in addition to several Federal leave laws. It has repeatedly been established that Maryland is not business-friendly. Mandated benefits such as this only contribute to that conclusion.

The Carroll County Chamber of Commerce, a business advocacy organization of nearly 700 members, opposes this bill. We therefore request that you give this bill an unfavorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike McMullin".

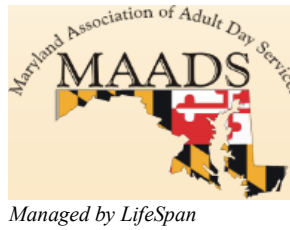
Mike McMullin  
President  
Carroll County Chamber of Commerce

CC: Delegate Chris Tomlinson  
Senator Justin Ready

# **SB0058\_UNF\_LifeSpan, MAADS, MNCHA\_Lab. & Emp. - Pa**

Uploaded by: Danna Kauffman

Position: UNF



Senate Finance Committee  
January 29, 2025

Senate Bill 58 – *Labor and Employment – Parental School Engagement Leave Act*  
**POSITION: OPPOSE**

On behalf of the LifeSpan Network, the Maryland Association of Adult Day Services, and the Maryland-National Capital Homecare Association, we oppose Senate Bill 58. This bill would create a new leave category allowing employees to use up to 12 hours of leave to attend school meetings and conferences. This leave is in addition to other benefits the employer provides, including *Maryland's Paid Sick and Safe Leave* and the pending *Family Medical Leave Insurance Program*.

The members of our collective organizations continue to face a critical staffing shortage made worse by the COVID-19 pandemic, which is placing tremendous strain on the post-acute delivery system. Addressing this staffing shortage is imperative to ensure that the services provided by our members can continue to be available to Maryland residents when they are needed.

Mandating expanded leave policies places a scheduling burden on healthcare operators and can lead to staff shortages. While we recognize the bill's provisions regarding "disruption to the employer" and "more than 5% of the employer's total workforce or workforce shift," those provisions do not alleviate our concerns. Often employees "call out" with very little notice, requiring, at times, for the provider to use agency staff, curtail admissions or realign staff, which can affect quality of care. Employers need the flexibility, especially amid the current shortages, to adjust staffing as necessary. Adding yet another layer of mandated leave will only make it more complicated for employers to ensure that they are able to deliver the services needed. For these reasons, we urge an unfavorable vote on Senate Bill 58.

**For more information:**

Danna L. Kauffman  
Christine K. Krone  
(410) 244-7000

# **SB 58-MDCC-Labor and Employment-Parental School En**

Uploaded by: Grason Wiggins

Position: UNF

## Senate Bill 58

Date: January 29, 2025

Committee: Senate Finance

Position: **Opposed**

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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.**

# **SB0058-FIN\_MACo\_OPP.pdf**

Uploaded by: Karrington Anderson

Position: UNF



## Senate Bill 58

### *Labor and Employment - Parental School Engagement Leave Act*

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Finance Committee

Date: January 29, 2025

From: Karrington Anderson

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** SB 58. This bill would mandate local governments, as public employers, to provide 12 hours of paid parental school engagement leave annually, separate from any existing leave policies. Encouraging parental involvement in education is undoubtedly important; however, this bill imposes unnecessary fiscal and administrative burdens on county governments, which already provide generous leave options.

Counties consistently demonstrate their commitment to supporting employees through robust leave benefits. Many counties already allow employees to use accrued leave for purposes such as attending school events. Mandating an additional leave category would strain county budgets and operations. Allegany County estimates the cost of implementing this requirement at approximately \$184,137 annually. St. Mary's County anticipates an annual expense of \$403,200 for 1,200 eligible employees. These are consequential – and unnecessary – costs for employers who already provide generous leave policies and are already struggling with strained budgets.

Moreover, counties are still grappling with the pending implementation of FAMLI or the Time to Care Act. The evolving regulations, which were initially expected in December, have delayed counties' ability to finalize compliance strategies. Introducing yet another leave mandate at this critical juncture would only compound the administrative burden, leaving local governments with inadequate time and resources to adapt. The cumulative effect of this bill's requirements undermines counties' flexibility to manage their workforce effectively.

Counties recognize the intent of SB 58 but ask the Committee to consider the broader implications of this proposal and its unintended consequences on local governments' financial stability and operational efficiency. For these reasons, MACo requests an **UNFAVORABLE** report on SB 58.

# **SB0058-FIN-UNV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Nina Themelis

Position: UNF



BRANDON M. SCOTT  
MAYOR

*Office of Government Relations  
88 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401*

**SB 58**

January 28, 2025

**TO:** Members of the Finance Committee

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

**RE:** Senate Bill 58 – Labor and Employment - Parental School Engagement Leave Act

**POSITION: OPPOSE**

Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **opposes** Senate Bill (SB) 58.

SB 58 mandates employers with at least 50 employees to provide 12 hours of paid Parental School Engagement Leave per school year. This leave would be designated for attending school meetings and conferences and would be separate from other existing leave benefits, paid at the employee's regular rate. Employers would also be prohibited from requiring employees to exhaust other leave before using this new entitlement.

While the bill seeks to enhance parental involvement in education, its provisions introduce significant concerns for Baltimore City as an employer. These include operational challenges, overlaps with existing leave policies, and potential fiscal impacts. Based on our review, we oppose the bill in its current form for the following reasons:

- **Lack of Time Specification:** SB 58 does not explicitly limit the use of Parental School Engagement Leave to employees whose regular shift coincides with school meeting times. This omission could lead to disruptions to work schedules and operational inefficiencies, especially for employers with flexible scheduling policies.
- **Overlap with Existing Leave Policies:** Baltimore City offers employees a robust leave package that includes 12–24 vacation days annually and four personal leave days, which may be used with as little as one day's notice. These policies already provide ample opportunity for employees to attend school-related activities without imposing additional mandated leave.
- **Workforce Disruption Risks:** Although the bill limits leave usage at four hours per instance and prohibits carryover, it lacks guidance on managing overlapping requests from employees on a single shift. This could disproportionately impact critical operations and essential services.
- **Potential Financial Impact:** The bill requires paid leave that is separate from existing leave entitlements and mandates coverage at the employee's regular rate of pay. This introduces a fiscal strain on employers, including local government entities like Baltimore City. The requirement for separate leave also complicates administrative tracking and may necessitate updates to payroll systems, increasing costs.
- **Proposed Exemption for Robust Leave Policies:** Public employers, such as Baltimore City, that already offer generous leave entitlements should be exempt from this legislation. With the current leave structure, the City of Baltimore may face a situation where additional leave may create both an operational and fiscal hardship.

The mandates of SB 58 overlap with existing policies and impose undue operational and financial burdens. We recommend that the legislation include an exemption for employers with robust leave policies and define eligibility criteria to minimize workplace disruption.

For the above reasons, the BCA respectfully requests an **unfavorable** report on SB 58.

## **SB58\_MNCPPC\_INFO**

Uploaded by: Jordan Baucum Colbert

Position: INFO



## **POSITION STATEMENT**

**Bill:** SB 0058 Labor and Employment - Parental School Engagement Leave Act

**Position:** Informational

**Date:** January 29, 2025

**Contact:** Debra Borden, General Counsel

Jordan Baucum Colbert, Government Affairs Liaison

Dear Chair Pamela Beidle,

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (“M-NCPPC”) has not taken a position on SB 0058. However, staff have gathered clarifying informational testimony on this bill.

**What this Bill Does.** Requires certain employers to provide certain employees with at least 12 hours of parental school-engagement leave each school year to attend meetings and conferences relating to the schooling of the employee's child. This bill also requires the State Superintendent of Schools and the Commissioner of Labor to provide notice of certain provisions of the Act and develop and make available a document that may be used to validate an employee's use of parental school engagement leave.

**Employee Benefit vs. Additional Costs.** The Commission strives to meet the needs of employees by offering award-winning, family-friendly work-life benefits and programs. Parents taking time to attend school meetings is crucial as it allows them to actively participate in the development of their children. As with any mandated paid time off benefit for employees, our employees will benefit from better engagement with their children's schools, but this comes at a cost to our organization. We currently have no data on the numbers of Commission employees who require time off from work to attend school meetings or conferences. The Commission employs several thousand seasonal employees who could be eligible for the proposed parental leave. Administering this new benefit will be challenging, particularly for seasonal and part-time workers, and will certainly require additional resources in our Human Resource Department. We encourage the Committee to take these factors into consideration.