

# **SB 523 - State Employees – Cancer Screening – Paid**

Uploaded by: Blair Inniss

Position: FAV



February 10, 2025

The Honorable Pamela Beidle  
Chair, Finance Committee  
3 West Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: SB 523 - State Employees – Cancer Screening – Paid Leave**

Dear Chair Beidle:

The Maryland State Council on Cancer Control (Council) is submitting this letter of support for Senate Bill 523 (SB 523), which would provide paid leave for state employees to undergo cancer screenings. This legislation represents a crucial step in promoting employee health and well-being, and reinforces Maryland's commitment to public health leadership.

**Investing in Employee Health and Well-being:**

As a champion of public health, the State of Maryland should lead by example in prioritizing preventative care. Offering dedicated leave for cancer screenings is a direct investment in the health and well-being of state employees. Early detection of cancer dramatically improves survival rates and treatment outcomes, saving lives and potentially reducing long-term healthcare costs. By providing paid leave, Maryland removes financial barriers that can prevent employees from accessing these vital screenings, ensuring they can prioritize their health without fear of lost income or job security.

**Creating a Culture of Health and Engagement:**

Paid cancer screening leave fosters a culture of well-being and demonstrates the state's commitment to its workforce. This investment in employee health translates to increased morale, engagement, and a stronger sense of value among state employees. These positive outcomes contribute to higher productivity, reduced absenteeism, and potentially lower employee turnover, ultimately benefiting the state's operational efficiency.

**Economic Benefits:**

Preventative care, including cancer screenings, is a sound economic investment. Early detection reduces the need for costly and complex treatments associated with advanced cancers. Furthermore, a healthy and engaged workforce is more productive, contributing to a stronger state economy.



**Leading by Example:**

Neighboring states like Virginia and Delaware have already recognized the importance of this benefit. Maryland has the opportunity to join them in setting a new standard for employee well-being and responsible healthcare practices.

The Council encourages the Committee to vote favorably on SB 523. By prioritizing cancer screening leave, Maryland invests in its most valuable asset – its people – while solidifying its commitment to public health and building a healthier future for all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Celano, MD." The signature is written in a cursive style.

Paul Celano, MD  
Vice Chair,  
Maryland State Council on Cancer Control

**SB 523\_AFSCME3\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Denise Gilmore

Position: FAV



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Patrick Moran – President

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**SB 523 – State Employees – Cancer Screening – Paid Leave  
Finance Committee  
February 13, 2025**

**Position: FAVORABLE**

AFSCME Council 3 supports SB 523. Effective July 1, this bill allows state employees to utilize up to 4 hours of cancer screening leave in any 12-month period for cancer screening after obtaining approval. We admire the intent of the bill which is to ensure that all state employees have access to leave to get screened for cancer, even if their earned leave is all exhausted or they are new employees. We represent municipal employees in the City of Baltimore who have a similar program, and we have no reported issues with the program there.

Early detection is one of the best ways to prevent fatalities from cancer and this good benefit to extend to employees. At a time when public employers are competing for workers, these additional benefits go a long way. Early detection may also help make costs cheaper overall for the state health plan. We hope to work with the Department of Budget and Management this year and other employers we negotiate with to put a cancer screening leave program in place.

SB 523 is a good bill and we urge a favorable report.

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.



**Letter for SB523.pdf**

Uploaded by: Mike McKay

Position: FAV

**MIKE MCKAY**  
*Legislative District 1*  
Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties



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Judicial Proceedings Committee  
Executive Nominations Committee

**THE SENATE OF MARYLAND**  
**ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401**

*Cumberland Office*  
100N Mechanic Street  
Cumberland, Maryland 21502  
240-362-7040

*Joint Committees*  
Administrative, Executive,  
and Legislative Review  
Children, Youth, and Families  
Program Open Space and Agricultural  
Land Preservation

*Williamsport Office*  
2N Conococheque Street  
Williamsport Town Hall  
Williamsport, Maryland

January 24, 2025

RE: Fire/EMS Coalition Support for SB523

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

The Fire/EMS Coalition would like to express their support for Senate Bill 523:  
**State Employees – Cancer Screening – Paid Leave.** This is a basic bill that provides state employees with up to four hours of paid cancer screening leave with in a 12-month period.

The Fire/EMS Coalition supports Senate Bill 523 as it will provide screenings for those who are most susceptible to hazardous conditions in their line of work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Mike McKay".

Senator Mike McKay  
Representing the Appalachia Region of Maryland  
Serving Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties

**Voting Organizations:**

**Maryland Fire Chief's Association (MFCA)**  
**Maryland State Firefighter's Association (MSFA)**  
**State Fire Marshal (OSFM)**  
**Maryland Fire Rescue Institute (MFRI)**  
**Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services System (MIEMMS)**  
**Metro Fire Chief's Association**  
**Professional Firefighters of Maryland**

**Our Mission Statement**



The Maryland Fire/EMS Coalition unites Republicans and Democrats in support of fire/emergency services legislation that benefit all first responders. Becoming a member does not require taking positions on legislation; rather Coalition members are asked to offer support in a way that best benefits fire/emergency services in their respective Legislative Districts.

**SB0523-FIN-SUPP.pdf**

Uploaded by: Nina Themelis

Position: FAV



**BRANDON M. SCOTT**  
MAYOR

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

**SB 0523**

February 11, 2025

**TO:** Members of the Senate Finance Committee

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

**RE:** Senate Bill 0523 – State Employees - Cancer Screening - Paid Leave

**POSITION: SUPPORT**

Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** Senate Bill (SB) 0523.

SB 523 provides that certain State employees are entitled to a certain amount of cancer screening leave with pay under certain circumstances; and generally relating to cancer screening leave for State employees.

SB 523 applies only to state employees, and the City already provides this benefit to its employees. However, we are submitting this written testimony to highlight the positive impacts and benefits this policy has had for City workers.

**How the Program Works:**

The City of Baltimore offers its employees paid leave for cancer screenings as part of its commitment to employee well-being and preventive healthcare. This initiative, outlined in the City's Administrative Manual, ensures that employees can receive critical medical screenings without using their accrued leave time. Permanent full-time and permanent part-time employees are eligible for up to four (4) hours of Permission (P) time per calendar year to undergo cancer screenings. This time is not deducted from an employee's accrued leave balance, such as sick, vacation, or personal leave. However, if the screening appointment requires more than four hours, the additional time must be charged to the employee's accrued leave.

To request leave for cancer screening, employees must obtain prior approval from their supervisor before taking time off. They are required to submit a Request for Time Off Form as soon as their appointment is scheduled to allow the department to ensure adequate coverage. After completing the screening, employees must provide their supervisor with a Cancer Screening Program Certification Form, which is completed by the physician or medical facility conducting the screening. The supervisor verifies the screening and submits the certification form to the agency's

Human Resources/Personnel Office for record-keeping. This process ensures that Permission (P) time is properly documented for payroll processing while maintaining confidentiality in personnel records.

### **Benefits to Employees and the City:**

The Cancer Screening Leave Program provides significant advantages to both employees and the City of Baltimore. By allowing employees to take paid leave for cancer screenings, the City actively supports preventive healthcare, which can lead to early detection and better health outcomes. Employees who take advantage of this program can identify potential health concerns before they become serious, increasing their chances of successful treatment and long-term well-being.

For employees, this program removes financial and work-related barriers to seeking medical care. Rather than having to use their accrued leave or forego necessary screenings, they can access preventive healthcare without concern for lost wages or scheduling conflicts. This not only reduces stress but also promotes a healthier and more engaged workforce, leading to higher morale and greater job satisfaction.

For the City, encouraging preventive care through paid cancer screening leave helps reduce long-term healthcare costs. Early detection of cancer can lead to lower medical expenses by preventing the need for costly late-stage treatments. Additionally, a workforce that prioritizes health is less likely to experience prolonged medical absences, which can lead to increased productivity and operational efficiency. Employees who maintain their health are more consistent in their attendance, reducing disruptions and ensuring that City services continue to function effectively.

The Office of the Labor Commissioner (“OLC”) is responsible for administering the Cancer Screening Leave Program. While we do not have direct access to data regarding how often employees utilize this leave, we defer to the OLC for insights into utilization trends. The OLC may track these trends to assess the impact of the program and determine whether any policy adjustments are needed to improve its effectiveness.

Baltimore City’s Cancer Screening Leave Program is a strategic initiative designed to enhance employee health, lower healthcare costs, and improve workforce productivity. By eliminating barriers to preventive care, the City supports its employees in prioritizing their health while ensuring that municipal operations benefit from a healthier, more engaged workforce. This initiative represents a balanced approach that benefits both employees and the City by fostering a workplace culture that values well-being, efficiency, and long-term sustainability.

The BCA respectfully requests a **support** report on SB 0523 for these reasons.

**SB523 testimony 2.pdf**

Uploaded by: Robert Phillips

Position: FAV

# MARYLAND STATE FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

*Representing the Volunteer Fire, Rescue and Emergency Medical Services Personnel  
-a 501(c)3 Organization*



## **Legislative Committee**

17 State Circle  
Annapolis MD, 21401  
Chair: Robert Phillips  
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Cell: 443-205-5030  
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## **SB 523: State Employees – Cancer Screening – Paid Leave**

I am Chief Robert Phillips, Legislative Committee Chair for the Maryland State Firefighters Association (MSFA)

I wish to present testimony in support of **Senate Bill 523: State Employees – Cancer Screening – Paid Leave**

The MSFA is in support of this bill as it will allow for a yearly cancer screening for the employees and not cause them to lose any time or income due to being away from their jobs. Cancer has become a leading cause of death and debilitation. Early detection is recognized as the best way to cure cancer. The state should lead by example and pass this legislation to protect their most valuable asset, their employees.

The MSFA asks that you return a FAVORABLE vote on SB 523

Thank you and I would be glad to answer any questions you might have

Respectfully:

*Robert Phillips*

