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The Honorable Pamela Beidle
Senate Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Testimony of Trans Maryland

IN SUPPORT OF

House Bill #1241: Labor and Employment - Bereavement Leave and Leave for Family Illness - Qualifying Relationships and Type of Leave

To the Chair, Vice Chair, and esteemed members of the Senate Finance Committee:

Trans Maryland is a multi-racial, multi-gender community power building organization for Maryland's trans community. Since 2021, Trans Maryland has collaborated with a team of researchers on a state-wide assessment of trans community experiences.

Under current law, only the loss of a "child, spouse, or parent" is recognized for purposes of bereavement leave. This may contribute to experiences of "disenfranchised grief" or bereavement experiences that go unrecognized and unsupported in society. These experiences may be especially common for trans people in Maryland; our [report on social support](#)¹ found:

- The most common support sources were **friends** (87.0%) and **chosen family** (70.1%).
- Nearly half of the sample reported **family of origin** (47.4%) as a source of support; for people of color, this number was closer to one-third (36.6%).
- Most reported being **very or somewhat satisfied** (81.0%) with their support network.

The data highlights the importance of recognizing that the people who are important in the lives of Marylanders are diverse and do not always fall under narrow definitions of "immediate family." For trans people, this can be due to a variety of factors, including family rejection.

Providing adequate opportunities to use time off to grieve these losses is critical for the well-being of all employees in the workforce, including trans employees. Establishing an expanded list of "family members" including people who served roles equivalent to that of family members ensures losses are treated with care and dignity. The House Committee Amendments strengthen key definitions and clarify how employers can apply their own policies under the bill.

For these reasons, we urge a **favorable report** on HB 1241.

¹ Pease, M. V., Trovato, K. J., Clements, Z. A., & Galupo, M. P. (2025, January). *Social support and trans communities in Maryland: Implications for social support and bereavement resources, policies, and practices*. Trans Maryland. <https://doi.org/10.13016/jvyb-l2m4>