

SB0880_MontCoCoA_fav_final.pdf

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COMMISSION ON AGING

March 9, 2026

Finance Committee
Chair, Senator Pamela Beidle
Vice Chair, Senator Antonio Hayes
Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

SB 0880 SUPPORT

Dear Chair Beidle and Vice Chair Hayes:

We are writing on behalf of the Montgomery County Commission on Aging in support of **SB 0880, State Personnel - Maryland Workforce Retention, Recruitment, and Reentry Act**. The Montgomery County Commission on Aging (CoA) was established in 1974 and is authorized by the Older Americans Act to advise county government on the needs, interests, and issues of older adult residents, and to advocate on their behalf at the local, state, and national levels. In that role, the CoA serves as an advocate for the health, safety, and well-being of the County's 240,000 older residents at the local, State, and National levels. This legislation addresses a long-standing interest of the Commission and its constituents, specifically to promote the availability of appropriate employment opportunities for older adults.

SB 0880 purposes to establish a pilot program in the Department of Budget and Management to promote and support the inclusivity of State employment by increasing the availability of part-time positions with benefits in State government. The proposed pilot program resonates with the CoA given that research cited by [AARP's Public Policy Institute](#) shows that workers 65 and older are twice as likely to work part time as workers ages 25 to 64.

SB 0880 will establish and pilot test, to the extent practicable, a system that enables positions to be filled with part-time employees. Passage of this bill is important as it would help to address significant labor shortages in an often overlooked, labor pool of older adults.

Part-time work could have many of the following benefits, both for workers and employers:

- Retention of experience and knowledge;
- Increased flexibility, helping people who are care givers to both work and fill their care duty responsibilities;

Department of Health and Human Services

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- Mentorship and knowledge transfer;
- Improved Work-Life Balance;
- Cost-Effectiveness: Employers can avoid the costs associated with turnover, as part time work can extend the careers of older workers; and
- Reduced Burnout.

This legislation positions the State as a leader in workforce inclusivity, fostering economic growth while supporting the talents and contributions of older workers and enhancing the well-being of all workers. By leveraging the unique advantages of part time work, the State can create a supportive and productive environment that benefits employees of all ages. Maintaining and recruiting older workers is critical to the success of the State, employers, job seekers, and communities. Maryland's labor force is increasingly dependent on the older workers and this bill provides flexible work arrangements that can help promote an age-diverse workforce.

For all these reasons and with great appreciation for this initiative, we urge a FAVORABLE decision for SB0880.

Sincerely,
Linda Bergofsky and Wayne Berman, Co-Chairs
Montgomery County Commission on Aging

SB880 Testimony by M. Schaeffer in Support.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Monica Schaeffer

Position: FAV



SB880: Part-Time State Employment Pilot Program – Established (Maryland Workforce Retention, Recruitment, and Reentry Act)

Senate Finance Committee

FAVORABLE

March 12, 2026

Speaker: Monica H. Schaeffer, Ph. D, 596 Brookes Ridge Court, Bethesda, MD, 20816, monschaef@gmail.com, 301-233-2842

Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes and esteemed members of the Senate Finance Committee: my name is Monica Schaeffer, Ph.D. and I am honored to have the opportunity to testify in support of SB880.

I currently serve on the Employment Work group for Montgomery County's Age-Friendly Initiative. I am an active alumnus of the Montgomery County Commission on Aging on which I served for 6 years. I am speaking on behalf of the Montgomery County's Age-Friendly Initiative. As a research health psychologist and gerontologist, consulting now for the globally recognized Age-Friendly Institute and the national Encore Network, I am keenly interested and involved in how individuals and organizations can thrive in the 21st century longevity economy.

SB880 establishes a pilot program that will evaluate full time position vacancies in 5 different State agencies for conversion to two part-time benefitted roles. Passage of SB880 could help to address labor shortages by recruiting and retaining a talented, often overlooked and underutilized, labor pipeline of older adults and others, including current State employees, who are interested in phased retirement and/or find it difficult or impossible to work full time.



We are at a critical juncture. A significant economic engine for the State of MD is the 50+ age group, currently representing 36% of our state's population, with the 65+ age group growing faster than any other segment of the population. Governor Moore's *Longevity Ready Maryland* 10-year plan/initiative (of which I am a member of the Economic Opportunity Committee) recognizes the wealth of talent, experience, skills and institutional knowledge of the 50+ population and the need for improving economic opportunities for older workers. SB880 will help to implement new employment pathways for workers of all ages who both need to and want to work for financial stability as well as for continued engagement and purpose. SB880 will aid MD state government lead by example in making Maryland longevity ready.

By 2034, for the first time in American history, there will be more people over 65 years of age than children under 18, according to the US Census Bureau. While birth rates are declining to the lowest level in US history, 10,000 Americans are turning 65 every day and many are ready to delay retirement for 5+ years in exchange for flexibility. Providing flexibility ensures not only a smooth transfer of skills and critical knowledge, but also opportunities for mentoring across generations. Bringing together workers at different life stages will promote the co-generation of ideas and strategies for innovating how we work in the 21st century.

This aging demographic shift has changed the landscape of the traditional retirement years, namely the realization that the 55+ population both want to and need to work, and that there are not enough young people in the talent pipeline to fill all the vacancies. Even with automation and AI, labor shortages are predicted in the next decade. Yet 65% of US workers aged 50+ say age bias is a fact of life in the workplace and cite lack of attractive opportunities and difficulty in landing jobs.



We support and urge favorable consideration of SB880 because this legislation positions the State government to pilot a program that would help to address workforce inclusivity, foster economic growth for the State and economic opportunity for older workers, while supporting the talents and contributions of older workers and enhancing the well-being of all workers.

Thank you.

SB 880 Part-Time State Employment Pilot Program.pd

Uploaded by: Santi Bhagat

Position: FAV



Chair Pamela Beidle
Senate Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

February 6, 2026

WRITTEN TESTIMONY — SB 880 *Part-Time State Employment Pilot Program*. Position: Favorable

Good afternoon, Madame Chair and committee:

My name is Santi Bhagat. I am a physician in policy, founder of Physician-Parent Caregivers — a Maryland nonprofit think tank with over twenty years of health policy advocacy — and the founder of Invisible Wave, a growing social movement for Young Invisibles: young adults ages 18 to 40 who grew up with childhood-onset chronic conditions. This is not a small group: 1 in 3 young Americans grew up with chronic health conditions. Most importantly, I am the mother of a young adult who grew up with epilepsy and know firsthand what happens to these young people and their families.

Maryland's elected leaders have recognized this invisible population for years. Senator Chris Van Hollen and Congressman Jamie Raskin introduced a joint congressional resolution calling on the nation to act. Lieutenant Governor Aruna Miller, Speaker Joseline Peña-Melnyk, Senators Mary Beth Carrozza and Brian Feldman, and Delegate Sarah Wolek have all championed their inclusion in healthcare, education, and the workforce in Maryland. That bipartisan, bicameral recognition is a foundation we must build on.

I strongly support HB 1248 — and I want to tell you why it's personal.

When my daughter became seriously ill at age 8, I stopped practicing medicine. My husband could no longer travel for his business. We came to the verge of bankruptcy — exactly what research tells us happens to families like ours. A former board member, a Georgetown-trained attorney, faced the same impossible choice and also left her career.

When caregivers are forced out entirely, the losses go far beyond a paycheck.

If I could have worked part time — with benefits — everything would have been different. Our family would not have been on the verge of bankruptcy for two years. We would have had health coverage and contributed to social security. Most importantly, the 15 years of my education and training would have been put to good use. This would have helped my mental health and social connection - and I would have role modeled how mothers can work and balance the family.

And that is exactly what our young adults need too. My daughter is now in her thirties and still cannot commit to full-time work because of her chronic condition. We have ambassadors in our organization facing the same wall. One is a trained accountant — on disability — with skills Maryland's government could use. Another had to leave her job entirely and is now pursuing an executive MBA at Yale. These are not people who lack drive or talent. They lack an on-ramp.

SB 880 builds that on ramp. For caregivers. For young adults with chronic conditions. For Maryland's economy. Millennials and GenZ are the two largest generations and they comprise over half the workforce. Governor Moore pledged to leave no one behind - this bill can address that.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Santi KM Bhagat, MD, MPH
Founder and President

Physician-Parent Caregivers

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