

**TMD - FAV - HB1241.pdf**

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Position: FAV



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March 30, 2026

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](#)<sup>1</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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>

# **HB1241 - PJC FAV - Bereavement Leave in Senate.pd**

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## HB1241 – Labor and Employment – Bereavement Leave – Qualified Relationships

Hearing before the Senate Finance Committee, April 1, 2026

**Position: FAVORABLE**

The Public Justice Center (PJC) is a not-for-profit civil rights and anti-poverty legal services organization that seeks to advance social justice, economic and racial equity, and fundamental human rights in Maryland. Our Workplace Justice Project promotes justice and equity in the workplace. We work to expand and enforce the rights of low-wage workers to receive an honest day's pay for an honest day's work in a safe, equitable workplace. **The PJC supports HB1241, which would specify the familial relationships that qualify for use of bereavement leave.**

**HB1241 would ensure Maryland's workers can use bereavement leave when needed for the passing of their family members.** Current law already permits workers who are provided with paid leave to use that leave following the death of an immediate family member. The existing definition of immediate family, however, omits many important family relationships like grandparents and siblings for whom workers also need time to grieve. This bill does not provide any additional days of paid leave to workers, it simply recognizes that bereavement leave should be provided for other types of familial relations. Families come in many different configurations, and workers should have the peace of mind to know that their paid leave benefits will cover all of their loved ones when the unfortunate need for bereavement leave arises.

For the reasons discussed above, the Public Justice Center **SUPPORTS HB1241** and requests a **FAVORABLE** report.

**MDCC\_HB 1241\_Favorable with Amendments.pdf**

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Position: FWA



## House Bill 1241

**Position: Favorable with Amendments**

Committee: Senate Finance

Date: March 30, 2026

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Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce (“Maryland Chamber”) is a statewide coalition of more than 7,000 members working to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic growth and opportunity for all Marylanders.

As amended, House Bill 1241 (HB 1241) expands eligible relationships under Maryland’s existing bereavement leave provisions. The Maryland Chamber appreciates the intent of the bill, but we are concerned that the provision on page 3, lines 2-4, lacks an objective standard and will raise compliance issues for both employers and employees. For these reasons, we respectfully request that the provision be removed from the bill.

Specifically, the provision establishes eligible leave for, “An individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with an employee is the equivalent of a family relationship.” **In effect, the provision would require both employers and employees to subjectively evaluate personal relationships, which raises concerns about inconsistent application, potential disputes, and increased legal exposure.**

Many employers already provide flexible bereavement policies that reflect their workforce needs and organizational culture. As such, the Maryland Chamber’s position is that these matters are better managed through individualized discussion between employers and employees rather than statutory mandates. **For these reasons, we respectfully request that the provision on page 3, lines 2-4 be removed from the bill.**