



LAILA'S GIFT
Celebrating One Gift at a Time

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House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee

House Bill 724 — Employment Discrimination – Caregiver Status

Position: SUPPORT

Chair and Members of the Committee:

My name is Shari Bailey, and I am writing on behalf of Laila's Gift and from the perspective of a caregiver to express strong support for House Bill 724.

Caregivers play an essential role in supporting some of Maryland's most vulnerable residents, including children with complex medical needs, individuals with disabilities, and family members who require daily assistance to live safely and with dignity. Yet caregivers often face unique challenges in the workforce, including bias, assumptions about availability, and employment decisions influenced by their caregiving responsibilities rather than their qualifications or job performance.

House Bill 724 takes an important step toward fairness by prohibiting employment discrimination based on caregiver status. The bill recognizes that individuals who provide direct and ongoing care for a child or a person with a disability should not be penalized in hiring, promotion, compensation, or other employment decisions simply because they have caregiving responsibilities. Protecting caregivers from discrimination helps ensure that families can maintain financial stability while continuing to provide essential care at home.

From a caregiver perspective, balancing employment and caregiving responsibilities often requires extraordinary coordination, flexibility, and resilience. Many caregivers are already navigating medical appointments, therapy schedules, educational advocacy, and complex care systems. Employment stability is not just a professional concern — it directly affects a family's ability to access health care, maintain housing, and provide consistent care for their loved one.

Supporting caregivers also benefits the broader community. When caregivers are able to remain employed, families are more economically secure, individuals receiving care experience greater stability, and reliance on more costly institutional services can be reduced. Policies that recognize and protect caregivers strengthen families and promote healthier communities.



Laila's Gift works closely with families who care for children with significant medical and developmental needs. These caregivers are deeply committed to their loved ones and to contributing to their communities, including through employment. Ensuring that caregivers are protected from discrimination affirms their value and acknowledges the critical role they play in Maryland's health and social support systems.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on House Bill 724.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Shari Bailey
Founder, CEO, Caregiver
Laila's Gift