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Calvert and Prince George's Counties

Environment and Transportation
Committee

Vice Chair
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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Madam Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Government, Labor, and Elections Committee,

House Bill 1524 establishes a targeted paid leave benefit that allows working parents the opportunity to be present for important school functions in their children's lives without facing the fear of lost wages or workplace penalties. Parents are routinely asked to be present for conferences, academic planning meetings, Individualized Education Program discussions, disciplinary meetings, and school events that occur during standard work hours. For many families in Maryland, especially single mothers and fathers, participation in school events can require choosing between showing up for their child or maintaining financial stability. House Bill 1524 acknowledges the reality of many families in Maryland. It recognizes that parental presence at school functions is a moment when parents are able to advocate for their child, understand academic progress, and support educational success.

12 states including California, Colorado, Illinois, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington, D.C., provide leave protections that allow parents to attend school-related activities. Maryland should be a state that creates space for parents to show up for the moments that matter, whether that is discussing learning challenges, celebrating achievements, or participating in planning conversations that shape a child's academic path. This is particularly meaningful for single-parent households and working families who may not have additional caregivers or workplace flexibility to rely on. We see time and time again that a parent showing up for their child has a beneficial and significant impact on their performance. When parents are unable to attend these moments due to work constraints, students can lose opportunities for coordinated support and families may feel disconnected from the educational process.

The bill's guardrails, including employer size thresholds, monthly limits, and documentation requirements, reflect a thoughtful balance between supporting families and providing operational clarity for employers. This targeted approach ensures the policy remains manageable while advancing a broader commitment to family engagement and student success.

At its core, House Bill 1524 affirms that Maryland values both work and family. It recognizes that the ability to be present for a child's education should not depend solely on workplace flexibility or financial sacrifice. Supporting parental engagement strengthens school partnerships, improves student outcomes, and reinforces family stability.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report on House Bill 1524.

Very Truly Yours,

Jeffrie E. Long, Jr.
Delegated Jeffrie E. Long, Jr.

