

HB0086_RichardKaplowitz_FAV

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**TESTIMONY ON HB#0086 - POSITION: FAVORABLE
State and Local Employees - Cancer Screening - Paid Leave**

TO: Chair Wells, Vice Chair Kerr, and members of the Government, Labor and Elections Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#/0086, **State and Local Employees - Cancer Screening - Paid Leave**

This bill will encourage time is provided to people serving in our government to have the time paid for participation in cancer health screening through early detection. It will accomplish this by providing that certain State, county, and municipal employees are entitled to up to 4 hours of paid cancer screening in any 12-month period after obtaining approval from their appointing authorities.

Yale Medicine is reporting "... But cancer is occurring in more adults at younger ages—before they turn 40 or 50 and sometimes even earlier."¹ This early detection, and making it more possible by policies encouraging testing, can save lives.

Many individuals in this age group are too young for recommended routine cancer screenings—for example, mammography screening typically starts at age 40 and colonoscopies at age 45. And busy lives make it difficult to keep up with routine primary care visits, where family history might prompt a doctor to suggest an earlier screening. Others may not go to the doctor because they have limited or no health insurance—or they believe their health problems are not serious enough to warrant a visit. This can result in diagnosis delays, which raise the risk of cancer potentially being diagnosed at a more advanced stage, which may be harder to treat.²

Insurance costs rise significantly for government when employees need more advanced treatments due to failure to treat a cancer diagnosis promptly before it becomes more critical. Paid leave will not only possibly save a life, the benefits versus costs to the employer can be a determining factor in favor of paid leave versus costly insurance bills.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB0086.

¹ <https://www.yalemedicine.org/news/early-onset-cancer-in-younger-people-on-the-rise>

² ibid