



January 31, 2017

The Honorable Thomas M. Middleton  
Finance Committee  
3 East, Miller Senate Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: SB 230 – Maryland Healthy Working Families Act - Oppose**

Dear Senator Middleton:

Senate Bill 230, as in last year's submission, seeks to mandate employers to provide earned sick and safe leave time to be used under certain circumstances.

There are many serious concerns with this legislation which revolve around the costs and liabilities to implement these requirements. While burdening businesses that least can afford this mandate, the bill contains several aspects which are contrary to best practices in this area.

- Applies to businesses with 15 or more employees – smaller businesses face a disproportionate financial and staffing burden than larger businesses, and applies to employees working as little as 8 hours per week.
- The bill requires reinstatement of accrued, unused time if the employee is rehired within 9 months. This is not standard practice with any type of leave and would add an additional financial liability a business must carry on its books, further increasing business costs.
- Allowance for employees to use time not yet earned. Most employers do not allow “borrowing” of leave time; and when they do, it is often in cases of severe need only.
- Requires the allowance for use of time for non-medical, non-illness needs. Many employers require that sick leave be used for illness of the employee only, or for the illness of an immediate family member. Other types of personal leave may be available for non-illness related needs.
- Extends the definition of “family member” beyond what is standard and practical. Allowing use of such leave for grandparents, grandchildren and siblings, for example, in addition to what is traditionally defined as an immediate family member, is far outside the norm for leave policies; increasing direct labor costs in terms of wages, and the increased need to replace employees on leave for these additional circumstances.
- The bill does not allow for the employer to require employees to find their own replacement when possible for the hours the employee will not work. This is common practice in health care settings, retail and food service.

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The time, energy and money required to implement this bill will undoubtedly lead to businesses reducing jobs, hours, other benefits and possibly wages. It will also add an extra burden on employers to change away from best practices that have been established and in place for years. A one-size-fits-all approach is rarely practical and has very different effects on businesses of varying sizes and financial means.

The Carroll County Chamber of Commerce, a business advocacy organization of over 560 members, opposes this bill and therefore requests that you give it an unfavorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mike McMullin'.

Mike McMullin  
President  
Carroll County Chamber of Commerce

CC: Senator Justin Ready  
Delegate Susan W. Krebs