



February 5, 2019

The Honorable Dereck E. Davis
Economic Matters Committee
Room 231 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB 0341 – Labor and Employment – Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program – Establishment (Time to Care Act of 2019) – **Oppose**

Dear Delegate Davis:

This bill would create a state-sponsored mandatory paid leave program, based on the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), an unpaid job and benefit protected leave law. This state law would require both employers and employees to pay an unspecified premium to fund the benefit.

While the law states that it generally follows federal FMLA provisions, it is far more liberal in terms of both employee eligibility and which family members an employee cares for to be eligible to seek benefits. In addition, while FMLA covers employers of 50 or more employees, HB 0341 covers all employers, regardless of size.

Such a program may indeed be an attractive *voluntary* option for employers with the financial means to pay into it, it is extraordinarily burdensome to require *all* employers to fund such a benefit. As should be a consideration with all such proposals, it must be remembered that employers must continually find the money to cover the increasingly onerous mandates pursued by state legislators; and that the money must come from somewhere, some budget line. In light of that, those employers have the options to raise the price of their product/service, reduce wages/benefits for employees, limit future growth/jobs, etc. all on top of reducing other expense in order to meet the mandate. It is unreasonable to think this situation would add positively to our economy, jobs growth or the overall health of our state.

The Carroll County Chamber of Commerce, a business advocacy organization of over 600 members, opposes this bill and asks that you give it an unfavorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Mike McMullin'.

Mike McMullin
President
Carroll County Chamber of Commerce
CC: Delegate Haven Shoemaker
Senator Justin Ready

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