



January 27, 2021

The Honorable Delores G. Kelley
Finance Committee
3 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Re: SB 0727 – Maryland Healthy Working Families Act – Revisions and Public Health
Emergency Leave – Oppose**

Dear Senator Kelley:

This bill makes substantial changes to the existing Maryland Healthy Working Families Act. Among other provisions, it would require that employers provide almost 3 weeks of paid time off – *over and above the current requirement of up to 40 hours* – of paid sick/safe leave during a public health emergency. Length of employment and waiting periods included in the current law would be removed. SB 0727 also adds to the definition of covered family members to include those not related by marriage or blood. Furthermore, while following many of the provisions of the federal Families First Coronavirus Relief Act (FFCRA) leave, it removes verification/documentation requirements.

The addition of coverage for non-family members, coupled with the removal of documentation/verification requirements, will lead to greater abuse and fraud than the current law. Throughout the period of time that the FFCRA was in effect, many employers battled abuse and fraud due to the loose documentation/verification allowed. Removing even those protections will simply lead to more abuse and disruption to business. Most importantly, many Maryland businesses have been forced to close due to the economic pressures of the pandemic. Many more are teetering on the edge of collapse. Forcing those businesses to add to their bottom line at a time they are struggling to even pay the rent on their establishment is beyond reason – and certainly won't help those businesses' employees.

The Carroll County Chamber of Commerce, a business advocacy organization of over 600 members, strongly opposes this bill and asks 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 Haven Shoemaker

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