

# Maryland Jewish Advocacy DAY 2022



## **Time to Care Act - Paid Family Leave**

No one should have to choose between their job or taking care of their own or a loved one's health. Far too many Marylanders must make this impossible choice when they are facing an illness, welcoming a new child, or needing to care for an aging parent. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, only 17% of workers in the Mid-Atlantic Region have access to paid sick leave. The Time to Care Act would change that by guaranteeing every worker in Maryland up to twelve weeks of paid leave.

### **Senate Bill 275 / House Bill 8 (SB275/HB8) – Labor and Employment – Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program – Establishment (Time to Care Act of 2022) (Senator Antonio Hayes and Delegate Kriselda Valderrama) Senate Finance and House Economic Matters Committees**

This bill would establish the Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program (FAMLI) to be administered by the Maryland Department of Labor. Workers and employers would contribute a small amount from each paycheck, which would amount to a weekly contribution averaging \$7.24. When a worker needs to take time off for an illness, the birth or adoption of a child, or to care for a loved one, they will apply to the state for benefits. The program would approve benefits for up to twelve weeks and payments will range from \$50 - \$1000 each week, based on the recipient's income.

### **Why is this bill good for Maryland and the Jewish community?**

The pandemic has never made it more vital for every worker to be able to stay home when they, or a loved one, are sick. As Jews, we know that preserving life and health is paramount above all else, and this bill will ensure more people are able to stay healthy. Paid family and medical leave benefits everyone and is an issue that 88% of Marylanders support. Women and people of color are disproportionately impacted when they do not have access to leave, and in too many cases these groups are forced to leave the labor force to care for their families or health, increasing turnover among workers. At a time when every business is competing to attract and retain labor, small businesses are often the ones left behind by large, out-of-state companies who can better afford to offer paid leave. This program will level the playing field among businesses and workers. In a state where even unpaid family leave is inaccessible for 56 percent of working people, this bill has never been more critical.

### **What Can Be Done?**

Tell your legislators to support the Time to Care Act. Have you ever had to take an extended time off from work to care for your health or a loved one? Have you had to take unpaid leave from your job? Share your story if you feel comfortable.