



To: The Honorable Chair, Delegate Dereck E. Davis, and members of the Economic Matters Committee

From: Melissa S. Rock, Director, Birth to Three Strategic Initiative

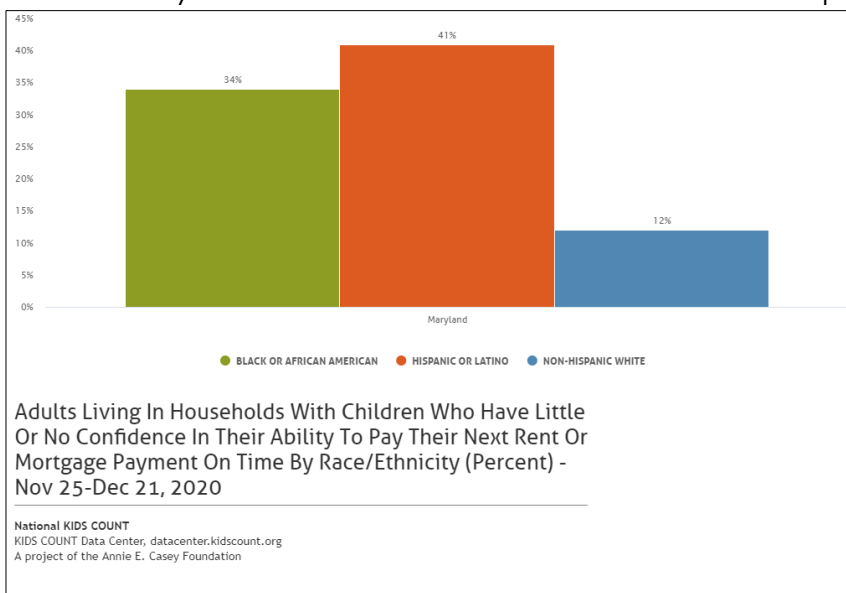
Re: **HB 1326: Maryland Healthy Working Families Act – Revisions and Public Health Emergency Leave**

Position: **SUPPORT**

As a long-time member of the Working Matters Coalition, ACY is pleased to support **HB 1326** to ensure that Maryland's sick and safe leave policies protect Maryland's families through public health emergencies. There are many workers across Maryland who have not had any access to paid sick leave throughout the COVID-19 pandemic because of exemptions in Maryland's sick and safe leave statute and in the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act. Some of the groups without this access to paid sick leave includes agricultural workers, temporary workers, on-call health professionals, and those working for companies with 500 or more employees.

Given how easily the COVID-19 pandemic is transmitted, it is especially important that individuals not have to choose to continue working even when they are ill because they cannot afford to miss work. We know that Black¹ and Latinx² Marylanders have been hit harder by the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to longstanding systemic and institutional racism, there are also significant disparities for Black and Latinx Marylanders with children who are on the cusp of poverty. Please see the attached graphs noting the racial disparities in being able to pay rent/mortgage,³ having enough food to eat,⁴ having difficulty paying for usual household expenses.⁵

We urge this committee to issue a favorable report on HB 1326 to ensure that all working parents and caretakers have access to paid sick and safe leave.



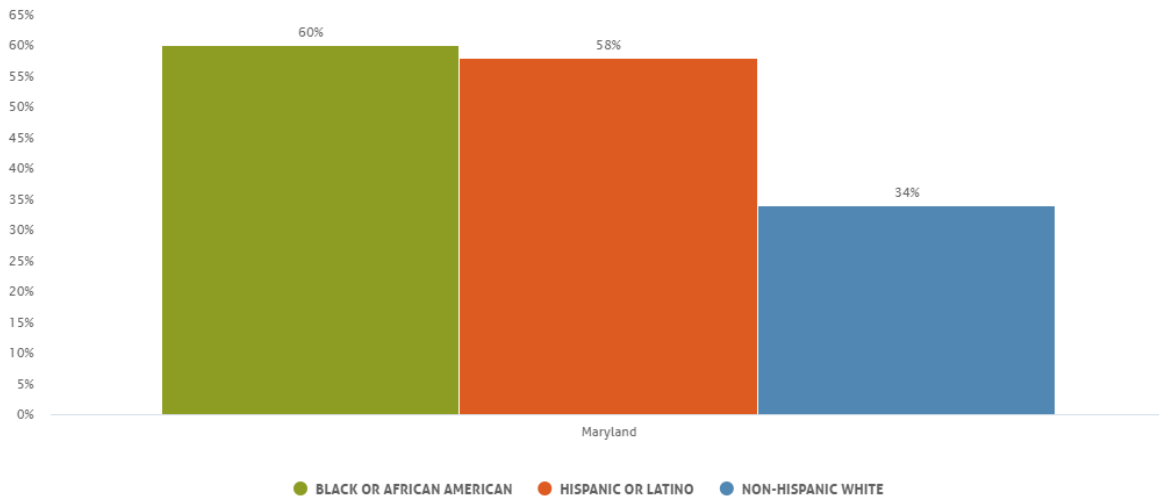
¹ The AFRO, *Black and Brown Health Care Workers More Likely to Get COVID-19* (Jan. 29, 2021). Available at: <https://afro.com/black-and-brown-health-care-workers-more-likely-to-get-covid-19/>.

² Ryan McFadden, *Health Experts Cite Virus's Effect on Md.'s Latino Community* (Oct. 28, 2020). Available at: https://thedailyrecord.com/2020/10/28/health-experts-cite-virus-effect-on-md-s-latino-community/?utm_term=Health.

³ <https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/bar/10942-adults-living-in-households-with-children-who-have-little-or-no-confidence-in-their-ability-to-pay-their-next-rent-or-mortgage-payment-on-time-by-race-ethnicity?loc=22&loc=2#2/22/false/2047/4039,2638,2597/21252>

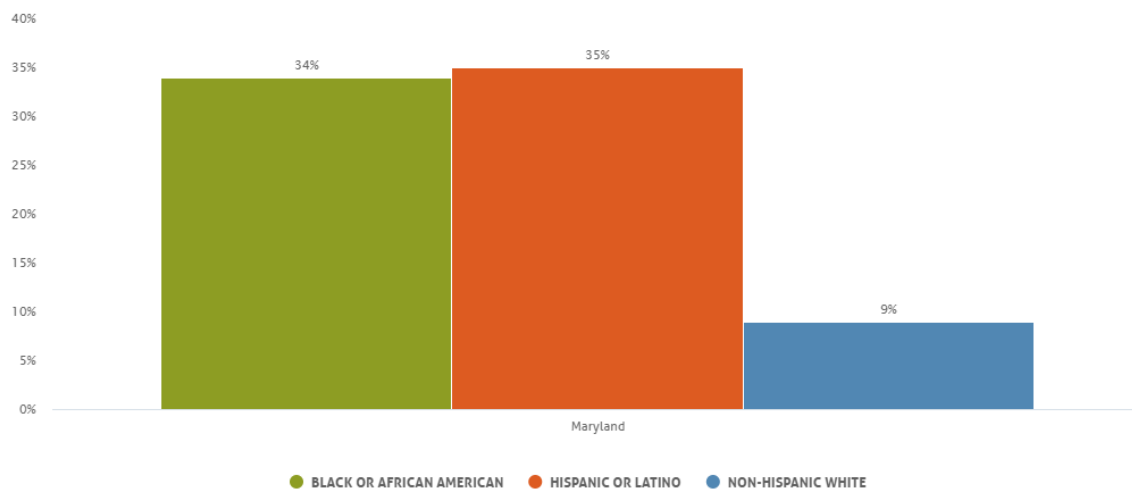
⁴ <https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/bar/10945-adults-living-in-households-with-children-who-sometimes-or-often-did-not-have-enough-food-to-eat-in-the-past-week-by-race-ethnicity?loc=22&loc=2#2/22/false/2047/4039,2638,2597/21255>

⁵ <https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/bar/10946-adults-living-in-households-with-children-who-had-difficulty-paying-for-usual-household-expenses-in-the-past-week-by-race-ethnicity?loc=22&loc=2#2/22/false/2047/4039,2638,2597/21256>



Adults Living In Households With Children Who Had Difficulty Paying For Usual Household Expenses In The Past Week By Race/Ethnicity (Percent) - Nov 25-Dec 21, 2020

National KIDS COUNT
KIDS COUNT Data Center, datacenter.kidscount.org
A project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation



Adults Living In Households With Children Who Sometimes Or Often Did Not Have Enough Food To Eat In The Past Week By Race/Ethnicity (Percent) - Nov 25-Dec 21, 2020

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