

HB 1326

Legislative Position: Oppose

**Maryland Healthy Working Families Act – Revisions and Public Health Emergency Leave
Economic Matters Committee**

Tuesday, March 2, 2021

Dear Chairman Davis and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Washington County Chamber of Commerce, with 550 members representing 40,000 employees, I urge you to **OPPOSE House Bill 1326**. Now is not the time to burden employers with more expanded mandates. Maryland's job creators cannot reasonably be expected to comply with the expanded mandates contained within HB 1326, especially now, as they struggle to juggle previously passed employer mandates and the operational and economic implications of COVID-19.

There are a number of significant challenges and unintended consequences that will result from the imposition of expanded leave mandates on employers. Specifically, HB 1326 would:

- Remove the agricultural and temp worker exemption from the Maryland Healthy Working Families Act.
- Expand the definition of a family member to include someone whose "close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship."
- Require an employer to provide an additional 14 business days, or 112 hours, of new paid sick and safe leave for full time employees during a declared public health emergency, and an equivalent amount of leave for part time employees.
- Require an employer to provide said leave regardless of how long an employee has been employed with them.
- Allows an employer to require advance notice for leave "if practicable", but does not allow an employer to require documentation.

A period of major economic downturn and future uncertainty is not the time to expand employer mandates that stand to negatively impact businesses that are struggling to overcome the impact of the pandemic.

On behalf of the business and non-profit members of the Washington County Chamber of Commerce, we respectfully request an **UNFAVORABLE REPORT** on HB 1326.

Sincerely,



Paul Frey, IOM
President and CEO