



February 22, 2024

The Honorable Ben Barnes
Chair, Appropriations Committee
Room 121, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB 949 - State Employees - Cancer Screening Leave

Dear Chair Barnes:

The Maryland State Council on Cancer Control (Council) is submitting this letter of support for House Bill 949 (HB 949), titled: "State Employees - Cancer Screening Leave." HB 949 would provide leave time for state employees to use to receive cancer screenings.

As a champion of public health and well-being, the State of Maryland should lead by example by offering its employees dedicated leave time to receive crucial cancer screenings. This action benefits not only the individual health of its workforce but also fosters a positive work environment and ultimately strengthens the state's overall economic well-being.

Prioritizing cancer screenings through dedicated leave empowers employees to take charge of their health. Early detection significantly improves survival rates and treatment outcomes, potentially saving lives and reducing future healthcare costs associated with advanced cancers. By providing paid leave, the state removes financial barriers and anxieties, allowing employees to prioritize their health at critical moments without fear of losing income or jeopardizing their job.

Offering cancer screening leave promotes a culture of well-being and employee engagement. It demonstrates the state's commitment to its workforce, fostering trust, loyalty, and a sense of value among employees. This translates to increased morale, productivity, and potentially lower turnover rates, benefiting both the employees and the state's operational efficiency.

Providing leave for cancer screenings presents a sound economic investment. Early detection and preventative care significantly reduce long-term healthcare costs by catching cancers at treatable stages before they require expensive interventions. Additionally, a healthy and engaged workforce contributes to a flourishing economy through increased productivity and reduced absenteeism.

As neighboring states like Virginia and Delaware already offer such leave programs, Maryland has the opportunity to set a new standard for employee well-being and responsible healthcare practices.



The Council urges the Committee to vote in favor of HB 949. By prioritizing cancer screening leave, the state invests in its most valuable asset - its people - while demonstrating its commitment to public health and creating a stronger, healthier Maryland for all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Cullen, MD". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped "K" and a distinct "C" for "Cullen".

Kevin Cullen, MD
Chair,
Maryland State Council on Cancer Control