



House Bill 1

Labor and Employment – Maryland Healthy Working Families Act

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Economic Matters Committee

Date: February 10, 2017

From: Kevin Kinnally

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** HB 1. This bill would require county employers to provide paid sick and safe leave at a mandated rate of pay for employees, including full-time, part-time, seasonal, and contractual employees. The bill expands the definition of “family members” and includes a broad range of circumstances for taking sick leave.

Even though county governments generally offer generous benefits and leave policies, in some circumstances, these mandates would be inefficient and difficult. Counties often provide substantially more sick leave and parental leave than the legislation prescribes for full-time employees. However, they do not all provide the same benefits to part-time workers.

Extending broad leave benefits to part-time employees would require counties to make administrative changes and incur additional costs; however, the larger concern is the potential operational inefficiency. Providing many public services depends on the attendance of those employees who work a limited schedule. Additionally, this bill may increase costs of providing services, such as after-school activities, summer camps, and community services for vulnerable populations. Accommodating this legislation could result in cuts to those programs.

The expansive definition of “sick leave” allowed under this legislation and the extended definition of “family member” would entitle part-time employees to absences for many reasons other than their own health. In the context of county government, the unscheduled absence of these employees can overburden other county workers and create extra expenses in the provision of services to the public.

For these reasons, MACo requests the Committee give an **UNFAVORABLE** report on HB 1.