



House Bill 580

Labor and Employment – Maryland Healthy Working Families Act

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Economic Matters Committee

Date: March 1, 2016

From: Robin Clark Eilenberg, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** HB 580. This bill would require county employers to provide paid sick leave at a normal 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 array 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. Counties rely on part-time, on-call, and temporary personnel to provide various support services, including emergency medical services.

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 essential services to the public.

For these reasons, MACo requests the Committee give an **UNFAVORABLE** report to HB 580.