



House Bill 851

Counties – Paid Sick Leave for Limited-Term Grant-Funded Employees – Requirement

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Economic Matters Committee

Date: March 1, 2016

From: Robin Clark Eilenberg, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** HB 851. This legislation will require all counties to provide an employee whose position is funded through a limited-term grant with paid sick leave in the same manner and to the same extent that the county provides paid sick leave to an employee in an equivalent position that is not funded through a limited-term grant.

County governments apply and receive grant-funding in order to expand the breadth of their service offerings to the local community. Many grant-funded employees work in community services, reaching out to the elderly and providing them health and nutrition education, housing, advocacy, in-home services, and other programs that support their ability to thrive in the community.

In general, the grant's terms dictate staff benefits – frequently including paid time off and sick leave. Requiring all grant-funded employees to be provided with paid sick leave despite the grant's own terms would most likely reduce overall output. This could shift the effectiveness of the grant away from the primary service recipients and toward overhead costs.

County community services and aging agencies are struggling to continue all services as they transition to new fee-for-service models. At the same time, populations of elderly are rising in Maryland, and residents in many areas of the state still suffer from the recession. Counties seek out grant funding to help continue key services in difficult times.

Many grant-funded employees receive some type of paid time off, though it may not be categorized as sick leave or precisely equivalent to that of other employees. Requiring specific benefits for each grant-funded employee will add administrative complexities to grant tracking and could reduce services provided to needy residents. For these reasons, MACo requests the Committee give an **UNFAVORABLE** report to HB 851.