



House Bill 854

*Units of State Government – Award of Grants to Counties –
Requirement of Paid Sick Leave*

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Economic Matters Committee

Date: February 28, 2017

From: Kevin Kinnally and Barbara Zektick

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** HB 854. This bill would require county employers to provide paid sick leave at a mandated rate of pay for State grant-funded employees.

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.

Even though county governments generally offer generous benefits and leave policies, this mandate would be inefficient and difficult. Requiring State grant-funded employees to be provided with paid sick leave 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 individuals 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 State grant-funded employee will add administrative complexities to grant tracking and could reduce services provided to residents in need. For these reasons, MACo requests the Committee give an **UNFAVORABLE** report to HB 854.