



National Association for the Advancement of Colored People NAACP
Montgomery County Branch
Testimony on Bill 10-22 Paid Parental Leave
Tuesday, July 12, 2022

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Montgomery County Branch, supports Council Bill 10-22, The Paid Parental Leave sponsored by Councilman Andrew Friedson.

In June, the Maryland General assembly passed the Time to Care Act, which provides up to 12 weeks of paid benefits. Council Bill 10-22, The Paid Parental Leave Act, will provide paid parental leave to County employees and will supplement the State’s Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI) program.

Taken together, these two measures will make Maryland the ninth state to provide some form of paid family and medical leave. Under Bill 10-22, there would be a new category of paid parental leave for County employees. Bill 10-22 will allow parents 240 hours of paid leave to care for a newborn, newly adopted child, or newly placed foster child.

Bill 10-22 is not only timely but necessary. According to a recent report by the Center for American Progress, the need for paid leave stretches across race, ethnicity, and gender, however, paid leave policies have a greater impact on the economic well-being of the African American family because **“the vast majority of Black mothers—more than 80 percent—are sole, primary, or co-breadwinners for their households.** This is a far greater share than that of mothers from other racial or ethnic groups, demonstrating how vital Black women’s earnings are to their families’ economic security.”¹

By providing this county level paid parental leave prior to the implementation of the state program, this county will help fulfill its promise to address long-standing racial inequities. According to a report by the National Partnership for Women and Families, one effect of the racial wealth gap is that **“on average, families of color have fewer resources than white families to plan for and absorb the effects of a serious personal or family medical issue, including the birth or adoption of a new child.** In fact, half of households of color live in “liquid asset poverty,” which means they lack access to enough liquid assets – such as savings and publicly traded stocks – to live at least at the poverty level for 12 weeks. That compares to 28 percent of white households who live in liquid asset poverty. Households of color are nearly twice as likely to be

¹ “Black Women Need Access to Paid Family and Medical Leave”, Center for American Progress, March 2022.



economically insecure in the event of income loss than white households. These disparities persist even when considering education levels.”²

In sum, this bill could make a real difference for the families of many county employees. While the NAACP Montgomery County Branch seeks civil rights and equity for all, we believe this bill is a step in the right direction to assure family-friendly public policies that favorably impact people of color.

We also look forward to working with the County Council on this measure.

MC/NAACP/7022

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² Paid Family And Medical Leave, A Racial Justice Issue and Opportunity, National Partnership for Women and Families, August 2018.