



House Bill 86

State and Local Employees - Cancer Screening - Paid Leave

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Government, Labor, and Elections
Committee

Date: January 27, 2026

From: Karrington Anderson

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** HB 86. This bill would mandate that state and local governments, as public employers, provide four hours of paid cancer screening leave, separate from any existing leave policies.

Counties strongly support policies that promote employee health and early detection of serious illnesses, including cancer screening. Ensuring employees can access preventive care is a shared priority for local governments. However, this bill would establish a new, stand-alone paid leave entitlement – four hours annually – that is both redundant and administratively burdensome given existing and generous leave options already available to county employees.

Under current law and county practice, cancer screening is an allowable and appropriate use of accrued sick leave or sick and safe leave. Mandating a separate leave category creates redundancy while imposing new fiscal and operational pressures on local governments. The potential cost impact could be significant, depending on workforce size and wage levels. At a time when counties are managing constrained budgets, adding a duplicative leave requirement diverts limited resources without meaningfully expanding access beyond what is already available to employees.

Counties recognize and appreciate the intent of HB 86 but ask the Committee to consider the broader implications of this proposal and its unintended consequences on local governments' financial stability and operational efficiency. For these reasons, MACo requests an **UNFAVORABLE** report on HB 86.