



# Catholics *in* Annapolis

2017

## LEGISLATION

**Healthy Working Families Act**  
SB 230/HB 1

## SPONSORS

Senator Middleton  
Delegate Clippinger

## COMMITTEES

Senate Finance  
House Economic Matters

## CONFERENCE POSITION SUPPORT

## STAFF CONTACT

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## HEALTHY WORKING FAMILIES ACT

### BACKGROUND

The Act allows all workers to earn paid sick and safe days. For employers with 15 or more employees, one hour of paid sick and safe time is earned for every 30 hours worked, up to a maximum of seven full days (or 56 hours) per year. For employers with 14 or fewer employees, unpaid, job-protected sick and safe leave is earned at the same ratio.

“Safe time” is leave that can be used to address medical, counseling, legal, and relocation needs resulting from domestic violence, stalking, or sexual assault. If an employer has a paid sick leave policy in place that meets these requirements, no additional leave is necessary.

### POSITION STATEMENT

Both the dignity of work and a priority concern for the poor and vulnerable are embedded in our Catholic Social Teaching and are an ever-constant reminder of the value of work and workers in participating in God’s creation. The Maryland bishops’ 2014 statement on the dignity of work emphasized that it is in the best interests of our society to support policies, such as the Healthy Working Families Act, that benefit families and keep workplaces healthier.

“When work is held hostage by the logic of profit alone and human life is disregarded, the degradation of the soul contaminates everything...

... And the consequences fall most of all on the poor and poor families. The modern organization of work sometimes shows a dangerous tendency to consider the family a burden, a weight, a liability for the productivity of labor.” ~ *Pope Francis Catechesis on the Family - 23:Work, August 19, 2015*

### TALKING POINTS

- Everyone gets sick, yet 750,000 people in Maryland have to choose between a day’s wage and staying home to take care of themselves or a loved one who is sick because they have no ability to earn a single day of paid sick leave.
- Earned sick and safe leave improves public health, saves businesses as much as \$132 million each year - largely from reduced turnover - helps provide financial security for families to meet basic needs, and allows victims of domestic violence, stalking, or sexual assault better access the services they need without the threat of losing their jobs.
- Women make up half of our workforce and 2/3 of family caregivers, yet 54 percent of working women do not have access to earned sick leave. One in five women report that they or a family member have been fired or disciplined for taking time off to care for a family member.
- A University of Maryland-Washington Post poll in 2015 showed that 91 percent of Democrats and 64 percent of Republicans in Maryland support allowing workers to earn sick leave based on the number of hours they work.