
To: Members of The Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

From: MARYLAND STATE BAR FAMILY AND JUVENILE LAW SECTION COUNCIL – Ilene Glickman, Legislative Committee Chair and Daniel Renart, Legislative Committee Chair

Date: February 27, 2020

Subject: **Senate Bill 665 – Family Law – Custody Evaluator – Information to Parties**

Position: **SUPPORT**

This testimony is submitted on behalf of the Family and Juvenile Law Section Council (“FJLSC”) of the Maryland State Bar Association (“MSBA”). The FJLSC is the formal representative of the Family and Juvenile Law Section of the MSBA, which promotes the objectives of the MSBA by improving the administration of justice in the field of family and juvenile law and, at the same time, tries to bring together the members of the MSBA who are concerned with family and juvenile laws and in reforms and improvements in such laws through legislation or otherwise. The FJLSC is charged with the general supervision and control of the affairs of the Section and authorized to act for the Section in any way in which the Section itself could act. The Section has over 1,200 attorney members. The Maryland State Bar Association (MSBA) Family and Juvenile Law Section **supports Senate Bill 665 – Family Law – Custody Evaluator – Information to Parties.**

Senate Bill 665 would require courts, in any case that involved child support, custody or visitation, to provide information to the parties regarding the role, availability and costs of a custody evaluator in the jurisdiction where the case is being heard. The MSBA believes that it is always helpful and a best practice to provide parties with up-front information about the custody evaluation process, how an evaluation can be used by the courts, and the costs associated with an evaluation. This information is particularly important to provide to unrepresented litigants, who may have no knowledge of how an evaluation works, its costs, and the possible benefits of having an evaluation completed in their cases.

For the reasons stated above, the MSBA **supports House Bill 665 and urges a favorable committee report.**

Should you have any questions, please contact Daniel Renart by e-mail at drenart@rghlawyers.com or by telephone at 301-383-1525.