



JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR.
County Executive

CHARLES R. CONNER III, ESQ.
Chief Legislative Officer

KIMBERLY S. ROUTSON
Deputy Legislative Officer

JOEL N. BELLER
Assistant Legislative Officer

BILL NO.: **HB 1231**

TITLE: Family Law – Authorization for a Minor to Marry

SPONSOR: Delegate Atterbeary

COMMITTEE: Judiciary

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: February 20, 2020

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** House Bill 1231 – Family Law – Authorization for a Minor to Marry. This legislation would prohibit an individual under the age of 17 years from marrying.

In 2016, 85 people aged 17 and younger were married in Maryland. Child marriage can have devastating effects young girls. Girls who marry before 19 are 50% more likely to drop out of high school and four times less likely to complete college. They also face higher rates of serious mental and physical health conditions, domestic violence, and poverty. Pregnant teenage girls face a higher risk of forced marriage, sometimes to cover up statutory or forcible rape.

Maryland’s current minimum age for marriage is 15. Raising this age represents a step towards protecting some of the most vulnerable individuals in the State. Passing this legislation is a significant step towards keeping minors safe from exploitation.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 1231. For more information, please contact Chuck Conner, Chief Legislative Officer, at 443-900-6582.