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February 17, 2022  
The Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
2 East Miller Senate Building  
Annapolis, MD, 21401  
The Honorable William C. Smith Jr.

**Re: SB 508 – Estates and Trusts - Guardianship of Minors - Appointment by Court**

Dear Chairman Smith and members of the Committee,

It's my privilege to introduce Senate Bill 508.

Senate Bill 508 alters the circumstances under which a court may appoint a guardian of the person of a minor.

Under current law, if neither parent is serving as guardian of an unmarried minor, upon a petition filed by any person interested in the welfare of the minor, and after notice and a hearing, a court may appoint a guardian of the minor. Senate Bill 508 enhances and more carefully defines this policy. It provides that upon a petition filed by any person interested in the welfare of the minor, and after notice and a hearing, a court may appoint a guardian of an unmarried minor but only so long as the court finds by a preponderance of the evidence that (1) the appointment is in the best interests of the minor; (2) no testamentary disposition has been made; and (3) either (a) no parent is willing or able to serve as such a guardian; (b) each parent consents to the appointment of the guardian; and (c) no parent files an objection to such an appointment.

I am so pleased to have The Honorable Kathleen Dumais with me this afternoon to support this piece of legislation. I will defer to her to explain the rationale underlying this change in Maryland law.