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To: Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
From: Maryland State Bar Association (MSBA)
Subject: SB 688 – Prince George’s County – Judgeships – Circuit Courts
Date: February 19, 2024
Position: **Support**

The Maryland State Bar Association (MSBA) supports **Senate Bill 688 - Prince George’s County – Judgeships – Circuit Courts**. SB 688 alters the number of resident judges of the circuit courts by adding one additional judgeship in Prince George's County.

MSBA represents more attorneys and judges than any other organization across the state in all practice areas. Through its advocacy committees and various practice-specific sections, MSBA monitors and takes positions on legislation that protects the legal profession, preserves the integrity of the judicial system, and ensures access to justice for Marylanders.

The request for additional judgeships follows a thorough analysis by the Maryland Judiciary, taking into account several variables including actual and projected filings, the number of pending cases per judge, the ratio of attorneys to judges, the time required from the filing of the case through its disposition (divided by criminal, civil and juvenile), and the population per judge for each jurisdiction.

SB 688 will help to address the high-volume dockets in Prince George’s County Circuit Court, increase service to vulnerable populations, more equitably distribute judicial workloads, and allow judges to more effectively dispense justice. Circuit Court matters involve Maryland residents and businesses in major civil and criminal cases, including juvenile and family matters, domestic violence cases, District Court appeals, orphans’ court matters, and more. These courts deserve swift and appropriate resources to reduce delays in case timelines and any related increase in expenses for litigants. An additional judgeship for the Circuit Court in Prince George’s County will ensure the strength and integrity of our Maryland courts and the judicial process.

For these reasons, MSBA respectfully urges a **favorable report on Senate Bill 688**.

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