

SUSAN K. McCOMAS  
Legislative District 34B  
Harford County

Judiciary Committee

*Subcommittees*

Family Law

Public Safety

Rules and Executive  
Nominations Committee

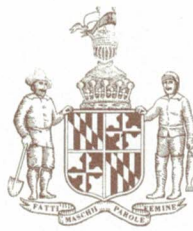
*Joint Committees*

Administrative, Executive,  
and Legislative Review

Legislative Ethics

*Past President*

Women Legislators of Maryland



## *The Maryland House of Delegates*

ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

*Annapolis Office*  
The Maryland House of Delegates  
6 Bladen Street, Room 323  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3272 • 301-858-3272  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3272  
Fax 410-841-3202 • 301-858-3202  
Susan.McComas@house.state.md.us

*District Office*  
P. O. Box 1204  
9 West Courtland Street  
Suite 100  
Bel Air, Maryland 21014  
410-836-9449 • 410-838-5187  
Fax 410-838-5768

### **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 848/SB 327 FAMILY LAW - CHILD CUSTODY – DETERMINATIONS**

HB 848 and the cross-filed SB 327 are the product resulting from the grueling studies and analysis commissioned by the Maryland General Assembly over a decade ago. Though various amended and modified forms of HB 849 were tenaciously sought by former Delegate Dumais, now a Circuit Court judge in Montgomery County, it was her deeply held belief that this proposed legislation would one day become the reality that would bring about a confluence of case law and statute, thus simplifying an already daunting task for many pro se litigants and the overly burdened court system. HB 848 is the overwhelmingly supported amalgamation of case law and statute.

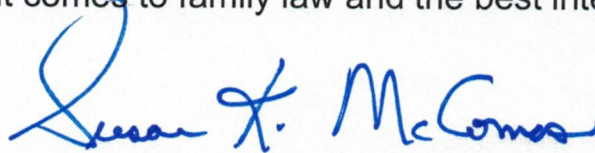
HB 848 codifies the factors a circuit court judge must consider in making a determination as to a custody case in Maryland. By so doing, its passing puts in one place, the Maryland Annotated Code, the nuts and bolts of what a layman needs to know in a child custody case.

The more than 15 factors the Courts are to consider in a child custody determination are listed within HB 848. These factors are distilled from multiple Maryland common law determinations, outlined and set forth by the Court in such cases as *Montgomery County v. Sanders*, 38 Md. App. 406, (1977) and *Taylor v. Taylor*, 306 Md. 290 (1986).

More importantly, the bill sets forth that the Court must articulate its findings of as to each factor on the record to assure that all the factors are considered This is a nod to a landmark case: Domingues v. Johnson, 323 Md. 486, 1991.

HB 848 garners the support of such groups as the Maryland State Bar Association Family Law Section and the Maryland Judicial Conference.

HB 848 is a no brainer when it comes to family law and the best interest of the child.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Susan H. McGowan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Susan" and the last name "McGowan" clearly legible.

**PLEASE ENTER A FAVORABLE REPORT FOR HB 848  
and as Cross-Filed: SB 327**