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Judicial Proceedings Committee



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

January 23, 2025

The Maryland State Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.  
2 East Miller Senate Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Re: Senate Bill 110: *Estates and Trusts – Priority of Claims on an Estate – Unpaid Child Support***

Dear Chairman Smith and Members of the Committee,

Under current Maryland law, when distributing money from a decedent's estate, there's an established list of payment priorities. As long as the estate's money lasts, the following claims against the estate are paid in this order: fees due to the Register of Wills, the costs and expenses of the administration of the estate, funeral expenses, the expenses of the estate's personal representative, a certain family allowance, taxes that are due, medical expenses associated with the decedent's last illness, up to three months rent, money for services performed for the decedent for the three months immediately prior to death, claims for certain public assistance, and finally all other claims.

Currently, unpaid child support falls into the "all other claims" category and is paid, if at all, on a pro rata basis with "all other claims", including such items as credit card balances, electric bills and the like.

The basis for this bill is the fact that unpaid child support is far more important to be paid than credit cards bills, electric bills, rent and even taxes.

Senate Bill 110 simply inserts claims for unpaid child support into the priority list prior to taxes, medical expenses, rent, services performed for the decedent public assistance claims and all other claims.

This is a simple but necessary bill that will help to better ensure Maryland's children are properly cared for. These children have suffered the death of a parent; they should not simultaneously suffer the loss of child support to which they are entitled for the period prior to the parent's death.

I appreciate the Committee's consideration of Senate Bill 110 and will be happy to answer any questions the Committee may have.