



DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Rafael López, Secretary

March 27, 2025

The Hon. Will Smith, Chair
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East, Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: TESTIMONY ON HB0275 - FAMILY LAW - CHILD SUPPORT - MULTIFAMILY
ADJUSTMENT - POSITION: FAVORABLE**

Dear Chair Smith and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

The Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS) thanks the Committee for the opportunity to provide favorable testimony regarding House Bill 275 (HB 275). The bill is the result of research and input from the Maryland Child Support Guidelines Advisory Committee, coordinated and chaired by DHS. Delegate Crutchfield graciously sponsored the bill for the Committee the last two legislative sessions.

With offices in every one of Maryland's jurisdictions, DHS empowers Marylanders to reach their full potential by providing preventative and supportive services, economic assistance, and meaningful connections to employment development and career opportunities. Our Child Support Administration (CSA) implements the child support program affected by HB 275. The bill revises the calculation of a child support obligation to include considering children living in a household who are not subject to a current child support action, but for whom a parent owes a legal duty of support. In addition, HB 275 allows courts the discretion to deviate from the guidelines for any financial consideration the court finds is in the best interests of the child.

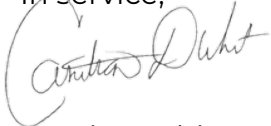
CSA often encounters situations where one or both parents owe a duty of support to other children living in the home who are not parties to a child support order. Currently, Maryland law only authorizes a court to consider the presence of other children as a "possible ground" for deviating from the child support guidelines. HB 275 would amend the definition of "adjusted actual income" in Family Law Article § 12-201(c) to establish an allowance for each additional child living in a parent's home to whom the parent owes duty of support, but who are not subject to the support order.

HB 275 aligns with the Department's goals to make child support more equitable by considering the child(ren) living in a parent's household. A parent's financial resources

are finite. HB 275 would provide new flexibility to CSA and the courts to determine a fair distribution of those limited resources. When child support orders are more equitable, parents are more likely to avoid arrearages and collection actions.

We appreciate the opportunity to offer favorable testimony to the Committee as you consider how best to modernize child support in Maryland. If you require additional information, please contact Rachel Sledge, Director of Government Affairs, at rachel.sledge@maryland.gov.

In-service,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Carnitra White", enclosed within a circular mark.

Carnitra White
Principal Deputy Secretary