

## THE COALITION TO PROTECT MARYLAND'S CHILDREN

*Our Mission: To combine and amplify the power of organizations and citizens working together to keep children safe from abuse and neglect. We strive to secure budgetary and public policy resources to make meaningful and measurable improvements in safety, permanence, and wellbeing.*



### **HB0302 – Courts and Judicial Proceedings – Statement of Charges – Human Services Workers Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee March 26, 2025**

#### **Position: SUPPORT**

The Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children is a consortium of organizations and individuals formed in 1992 who are concerned about the care of Maryland's most vulnerable children and work together to promote meaningful child welfare reform. CPMC **urges a favorable report on HB0302 – Courts and Judicial Proceedings – Statement of Charges – Human Services Workers.**<sup>1</sup>

Today we call on you to stand with us—and with Maryland's dedicated Adult and Child Protective Services caseworkers—by supporting this legislation. Each day caseworkers confront complex and often high-risk situations, performing their duties through home visits equipped with little more than an iPad and a phone. HB302 simply mandates that, when allegations arise from actions taken while carrying out official responsibilities, the State's Attorney must conduct a review and issue a recommendation *before* any criminal charges may proceed.

This safeguard is not about excusing wrongdoing — it is about shielding these professionals from groundless accusations that can derail their careers and weaken the very system designed to protect our communities. These public servants put themselves at risk to keep others safe—and deserve the same legal protections as other frontline workers.

Without this protection, we risk demoralizing and losing the very people who stand on the front lines of Maryland's child welfare and adult protection efforts. HB302 ensures fairness and due process for caseworkers, so they can continue their essential work without fear of unjust repercussions. Protecting these professionals against baseless charges is a necessary step in affirming our collective commitment to their work and the communities they serve.

It is for these reasons that the Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children **urges a favorable report on HB0302 – Courts and Judicial Proceedings – Statement of Charges – Human Services Workers.**

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<sup>1</sup> Members of CPMC represented by this written testimony include Members of CPMC represented by this written testimony include Catholic Charities of Baltimore, Center for Hope, Child Justice, Citizens Review Board for Children, Court Appointed Special Advocates (MD CASA), Court Appointed Special Advocates (Baltimore County), Everstand, MD Chapter - American Academy of Pediatrics, Maryland Association of Resources for Families and Youth (MARFY), Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence, National Association of Social Workers – MD, and State Council on Child Abuse & Neglect (SCCAN)