



DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

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

January 23, 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 HB0261 - ESTATES AND TRUSTS - PRIORITY OF CLAIMS ON AN ESTATE - UNPAID CHILD SUPPORT POSITION: FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Clippinger and Members of the Judiciary Committee:

The Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS) thanks the Committee for the opportunity to provide favorable testimony for House Bill 261 (HB 261).

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. The Child Support Administration within our department implements the child support program which is affected by HB 261.

Currently, child support balances are submitted to estates for payment, but are not given priority over other claims. HB 261 ensures that when surviving family is allocated a part of an estate, child support arrears also receive priority to provide for the deceased's surviving children. This proposed legislation mirrors the priority order reflected in federal bankruptcy statute.

HB 261 invests in surviving children because custodial parents and their children may be more likely to receive unpaid child support from the estate if it is considered ahead of other debts. The bill would prioritize the family allowance followed by unpaid child support. Prioritizing financial support for families demonstrates that in Maryland, family matters.

We appreciate the opportunity to offer favorable testimony to the Committee for consideration during your deliberations. If you require additional information, please contact Rachel Sledge, Director of Government Affairs, at rachel.sledge@maryland.gov.

In service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rafael López', written in a cursive style.

Rafael López
Secretary