

KAREN SIMPSON
Legislative District 3
Frederick County

Judiciary Committee
Chair
Family Law Subcommittee



The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 221
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3436
800-492-7122 Ext. 3436
Karen.Simpson@house.maryland.gov

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Favorable – HB403 – Public Information Act - Divorce Records

To Chair Wells, Vice Chair Kerr, and members of the Government, Labor, and Elections Committee,

I am Delegate Karen Simpson, District 3- Frederick. I respectfully request a favorable report on HB403 – Public Information Act – Divorce Records. The cross-file SB426 passed unanimously out of Judicial Proceedings on Friday, February 20, 2026.

HB403 recognizes that divorce records require the constitutional protection and presumption of privacy in the home. HB403 is consistent with the protection of similar records about children such as adoption, welfare, and student records.

HB403 was a constituent requested bill because their divorce record was requested by a nonparty – someone who wasn't a relative, friend, or interested party – who posted the full unredacted record online. The record included children's names, ages, social security numbers, dates of birth, and other identifying information, bank/financial records, driver's license numbers, cell numbers, and addresses.

My constituent, their spouse and children were harassed by many nonparty individuals with threatening calls and texts. It shouldn't have happened, but it did.

This bill requires strict confidentiality of divorce records. Individuals will still have access to the final divorce decree – but will not have access to sensitive information.

This bill will have no impact on state and local operations or finances.

Marylanders should not have to worry about where their information ends up solely because of a divorce record. While this will not undo what happened to my constituent, we can ensure it does not happen again.

I urge a favorable report on HB403.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Karen Simpson".

Delegate Karen Simpson – District 3 - Frederick