

KAREN SIMPSON
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Judiciary Committee
Chair
Family Law Subcommittee



The Maryland House of Delegates
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Favorable: HB497 - Family Law - Temporary and Final Protective Orders - Duration and Relief

Hearing on 2/12/2026 at 1 PM

To Chair Bartlett, Vice Chair Davis, and my Fellow Members of the Judiciary Committee

HB 497 is legislation that shows Maryland's continued dedication to supporting survivors of domestic violence and abuse. With this bill, we are extending the duration of temporary protective orders and expanding what relief is available to survivors.

Current law states that temporary protective orders remain in effect for no more than seven days after service. A final protective order hearing must be held within that same seven-day period.

Ensuring we are safe, and that our basic needs are met while looking for legal aid is hard to do when you only have a seven-day window. Existing law limits the scope of financial relief that may be included in a final protective order and survivors often incur significant expenses as a direct result of abuse. Expenses such as medical treatment, property damage, and attorney's fees can quickly accumulate, creating additional barriers to stability and independence.

HB 497 addresses these issues by extending the duration of a temporary protective order from seven to fourteen days after service and aligning the timeframe for the final protective order hearing accordingly. It also allows courts to require respondents to compensate petitioners for losses or expenses incurred as a direct result of the abuse, including medical and mental health treatment, repair or replacement of damaged property, food, temporary shelter or relocation costs, transportation, filing fees, court costs, and reasonable attorney's fees.

HB 497 promotes stability, accountability, and justice for individuals seeking protective orders.

I urge a favorable report on HB497.

Yours truly,

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

Karen Simpson – District 3 - Frederick