

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2001 Session

FISCAL NOTE

Senate Bill 158

(Senator Ruben, *et al.*)

Judicial Proceedings

Judiciary

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Family Law - Child Support

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This bill requires that a child support order remain in effect until the child receiving the support marries or turns 18, whichever occurs first. If an unmarried child is enrolled in at least four units of credit in a program at a secondary school, a child support order remains in effect until the child marries, graduates or is no longer enrolled in secondary school, or turns 19, whichever occurs first. The bill is not to be construed to prevent a court from modifying a child support award as circumstances require.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** The Department of Human Resources could verify the enrollment status of individuals receiving support with existing budgeted resources.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Current Law:** Child support payments are continued until the child marries or reaches the age of majority, which is 18 in Maryland.

**Background:** According to the Department of Human Resources, 40 states consider emancipation to occur when a child completes his/her secondary education or reaches 19. Only five states, including Maryland, emancipate a child at the age of 18. Three states emancipate a child at the age of 21. The remaining two states emancipate a child by court directive.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** Similar bills were introduced as SB 153 in the 2000 session, SB 242 in the 1999 session, and SB 265 in the 1998 session. All these prior introductions received unfavorable reports from the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Human Resources (Child Support Enforcement Administration), Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader – January 24, 2001  
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