

**SENATE BILL 657**  
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2002 Regular Session  
2lr2434  
CF 2lr1348

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By: **Senators Ruben, Forehand, Green, Jimeno, Kelley, Sfikas, Stone, and  
Van Hollen**

Introduced and read first time: February 1, 2002

Assigned to: Judicial Proceedings

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Committee Report: Favorable

Senate action: Adopted

Read second time: March 19, 2002

Returned to second reading: March 25, 2002

Senate action: Adopted with floor amendments

Read second time: March 25, 2002

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CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Family Law - Child Support - Age of Majority**

3 FOR the purpose of altering certain provisions of law defining the age of majority to  
4 provide that a person who has attained the age of 18 years and who is enrolled  
5 in secondary school has a right to support and maintenance until the first of  
6 certain events occur; establishing that this Act shall be considered a material  
7 change in circumstances for purposes of modifying a child support order issued  
8 before the effective date of this Act; and generally relating to child support.

9 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
10 Article 1 - Rules of Interpretation  
11 Section 24  
12 Annotated Code of Maryland  
13 (2001 Replacement Volume)

14 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
15 Article - Family Law  
16 Section 5-203(b)  
17 Annotated Code of Maryland  
18 (1999 Replacement Volume and 2001 Supplement)

19 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
20 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

1

**Article 1 - Rules of Interpretation**

2 24.

3 (a) (1) Except as PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION OR AS  
 4 otherwise specifically provided by statute, a person eighteen years of age or more is  
 5 an adult for all purposes whatsoever and has the same legal capacity, rights, powers,  
 6 privileges, duties, liabilities, and responsibilities as prior to July 1, 1973, persons had  
 7 at twenty-one years of age, and the "age of majority" is hereby declared to be eighteen  
 8 years.

9 (2) A PERSON WHO HAS ATTAINED THE AGE OF 18 YEARS AND WHO IS  
 10 ENROLLED IN SECONDARY SCHOOL HAS THE RIGHT TO RECEIVE SUPPORT AND  
 11 MAINTENANCE FROM BOTH OF THE PERSON'S PARENTS UNTIL THE FIRST TO OCCUR  
 12 OF THE FOLLOWING EVENTS:

13 (I) THE PERSON DIES;

14 (II) THE PERSON MARRIES;

15 (III) THE PERSON IS EMANCIPATED;

16 (IV) THE PERSON GRADUATES FROM OR IS NO LONGER ENROLLED  
 17 IN SECONDARY SCHOOL; OR

18 (V) THE PERSON ATTAINS THE AGE OF 19 YEARS.

19 (b) (1) The terms "adult", "of full age", or "of legal age" refer to persons who  
 20 have attained the age of eighteen years.

21 (2) [The] EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (A)(2) OF THIS SECTION,  
 22 THE term "minor", as it pertains to legal age and capacity, refers to persons who have  
 23 not attained the age of eighteen years.

24

**Article - Family Law**

25 5-203.

26 (b) The parents of a minor child, AS DEFINED IN ARTICLE 1, SECTION 24 OF  
 27 THE CODE:

28 (1) are jointly and severally responsible for the child's support, care,  
 29 nurture, welfare, and education; and

30 (2) have the same powers and duties in relation to the child.

31 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall be  
 32 considered to be a material change of circumstances for purposes of modifying a child  
 33 support order issued before the effective date of this Act.

1 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
2 October 1, 2002.