HOUSE BILL 1205

D4 5lr3139

By: Delegates Wivell, Baker, Hinebaugh, and Valentine

Introduced and read first time: February 6, 2025

Assigned to: Judiciary

A BILL ENTITLED

1	AN ACT	concerning
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Family Law - Prospective Foster Care Parents and Out-of-Home Placements

- 3 FOR the purpose of requiring a local department of social services to provide certain
- 4 information to a prospective foster care parent pertaining to the care of a child in an
- 5 out-of-home placement; authorizing a local department of social services to place a
- 6 certain number of children in an out-of-home placement; and generally relating to
- children in out-of-home placements. 7
- 8 BY adding to

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- 9 Article – Family Law
- 10 Section 5–504.1
- Annotated Code of Maryland 11
- (2019 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement) 12
- 13 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
- 14 Article – Family Law
- 15 Section 5–525.2
- Annotated Code of Maryland 16
- (2019 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement) 17
- SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, 18
- 19 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

20 Article - Family Law

- 5-504.1. 21
- 22 EXCEPT FOR INFORMATION THAT MAY BE PRIVILEGED OR CONFIDENTIAL, A
- 23 LOCAL DEPARTMENT SHALL PROVIDE A PROSPECTIVE FOSTER



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- INFORMATION ON THE MEDICAL, EDUCATIONAL, AND BEHAVIORAL HISTORY OF A 1 2 CHILD: **(1)** 3 THAT DIRECTLY RELATES TO THE CARE OF THE CHILD; AND 4 **(2)** THAT WOULD POSSIBLY AFFECT THE CARE PROVIDED BY A 5 PROSPECTIVE FOSTER PARENT. 5-525.2.6 7 (a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated. 8 (2) "Sibling" means a brother or sister of the whole or half blood or by 9 adoption. "Treatment foster care home" means an out-of-home placement facility 10 (3)that is part of a program designed and implemented by a child placement agency to provide 11 12 intensive casework and treatment in a family setting to children with special physical, 13 emotional, or behavioral needs. 14 A LOCAL DEPARTMENT MAY PLACE UP TO FOUR CHILDREN IN AN 15 OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT UNDER § 5-525 OF THIS SUBTITLE. 16 [(b)] **(C)** A local department shall place together siblings who are in an (1) out-of-home placement under § 5-525 of this subtitle if: 17 18 (i) it is in the best interests of the siblings to be placed together; and 19 placement of the siblings together does not conflict with a specific 20 health or safety regulation. 21(2)If placement of the siblings together conflicts with a specific health or safety regulation, the local department may place the siblings together if the local 22 department makes a written finding describing how placement of the siblings together 23serves the best interests of the siblings. 24Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in order to place siblings 2526 together the local department may place more than two children who require treatment in an eligible treatment foster care home if: 27
- 30 1. is in the best interests of the siblings; and

(i)

placement of the siblings together:

the local department makes a written finding explaining why

$\frac{1}{2}$	foster care home; and	2.	will	not harm oth	er childrei	n plac	ed at the same t	reatn	nent	
3 4	(ii) placement.	the	local	department	notifies	the	Administration	of	the	
5 6 7	[(c)] (D) (1) Any siblings who are separated due to a foster care or adoptive placement may petition a court, including a juvenile court with jurisdiction over one or more of the siblings, for reasonable sibling visitation rights.									
8	(2) If a petitioner under this subsection petitions a court to issue a visitation decree or to amend an order, the court:									
10	(i) interest of the children	•	hold a	hearing to de	etermine v	vheth	er visitation is in	the '	best	
$egin{array}{c} 12 \\ 13 \\ 14 \end{array}$	(ii) decision on the best int to the children; and		_				each child and st welfare and le			
5	(iii)	mav	issue	an annronriat	e order or	decr	ee			

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect

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October 1, 2025.