

MARYLAND JUDICIAL CONFERENCE
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Hon. Mary Ellen Barbera
Chief Judge

187 Harry S. Truman Parkway
Annapolis, MD 21401

MEMORANDUM

TO: House Judiciary Committee
FROM: Legislative Committee
Suzanne D. Pelz, Esq.
410-260-1523
RE: House Bill 148
Family Law – Nonpayment of Child Support - Sentencing
DATE: January 22, 2020
(1/23)
POSITION: Oppose

The Maryland Judiciary opposes House Bill 148. This bill requires a sentence for a conviction under a provision of law prohibiting a parent from willfully failing to provide for the support of his or her minor child to run concurrently with a sentence for any other conviction under the same provision of law imposed against the parent.

Although the Judiciary understands this is an effort to consolidate sentences for convictions for failure to pay child support, there are situations in which courts may want sentences to run consecutively. If enacted, this bill would limit judges' discretion to do so. The Judiciary believes that it is important for judges to weigh the facts and circumstances for each case, including possible mitigating factors, when imposing a sentence.

cc. Hon. Shaneka Henson
Judicial Council
Legislative Committee
Kelley O'Connor