

**SB0488 Family Law - Marriage - Licenses and Records**  
**Judicial Proceedings Committee – February 9, 2021**  
**Sponsor: Senator Pamela Beidle**  
**Position: Support**

**Testimony of Mahasin El Amin, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Prince George’s County**

Thank you, Chairman Smith and members of the committee, for this opportunity to testify in support of SB 488. For the record, my name is Mahasin El Amin, Clerk of the Circuit Court for Prince George’s County. Like my colleague, Clerk Poyer, I am testifying on behalf of the Clerk’s Association whose members unanimously support this bill.

Our Clerk’s Association supports SB 488 because it updates two sections of the Family Law Article related to marriage licenses and records. It also brings it in line with our current business practices. Specifically, regarding the second update, Family Law section 2-501 Marriage License Book, currently requires that each Clerk keep a “**marriage license book.**” As you know, the Clerk of the Circuit Court is responsible for maintaining the court’s records, that includes case and non-case related matters, including marriage license applications and the actual certificate. While official marriage license records were kept in paper book format for many years, the transition to electronic records occurred years ago. SB 488 updates the statute’s wording to accommodate modern technology to allow for marriage license records to be kept in a marriage record book “**or an electronic record.**” It should be noted that the update gives the Clerks the option to record the records in a book and/or use an electronic record. Either process will maintain the records for historical purposes; and there are systems in place to ensure the records are secure. This includes being stored with the Maryland Division of Vital

Records and Maryland State Archives. This update is also in line with the Judiciary's efforts in its electronic case management system.

Our Association hopes you will vote favorably on both updates to the Family Law article and I look forward to answering any questions you may have. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this bill.