



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony of Senator Jill P. Carter
In Favor of SB0394 - Family Law - Nonpayment of Child Support -
Sentencing
Before the Judicial Proceedings Committee
on February 9, 2021**

Mr. Chairman, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

Senate Bill 394 closes a loophole in our child support enforcement law by providing that a noncustodial parent's sentence for willful non-payment of child support must run concurrent with other sentences under the same provision. Under current law, a parent may serve multiple, consecutive sentences under the same provision.

The harm in these cases is simple to understand. Those convicted under current law have the potential of being incarcerated for upwards of 10 or more years, taking away from the child valuable time and experiences with their parent. Not only is excessive incarceration in these cases detrimental to the emotional development of the child, it is unproductive in recovering owed child support, and unnecessarily expensive, costing the state more than \$13,000 per year to keep these parents incarcerated.

With this bill, much of this harm can be alleviated, and family ties strengthened, throughout our state. In addition, Maryland can join other states, like our neighboring Virginia, in adopting concurrent sentencing for child support cases.

Given that this bill will strengthen family ties, promote the welfare of our state's children, and positively affect state or local incarceration costs, this bill makes common sense.

As such, I urge this committee to give a favorable report on Senate Bill 394.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jill P. Carter". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jill P. Carter