

EMILY SHETTY
Legislative District 18
Montgomery County

Judiciary Committee



Annapolis Office
The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 224
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3181 · 301-858-3181
800-492-7122 Ext. 3181
Emily.Shetty@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony in Support of HB9- Family Law - Mandatory Reporter Training

Chairman Clippinger, Vice-Chair Atterbeary and Members of the Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of HB9, which would require the Department of Human Services to make available online a free course on child abuse prevention, identification, and reporting. This bill is identical to the bill that passed unanimously out of the Judiciary committee and the House during the 2020 session, but was unable to pass out of the Senate due to the shortened session.

As many on the committee are aware, mandatory reporters of child abuse include health care practitioners, police officers, educators, and human service workers who are acting in a professional capacity and who have reason to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect. Although they must notify a law enforcement agency or local department of social services if they suspect abuse or neglect, only certain mandatory reporters are required by law to take trainings on how to identify, prevent and report suspected abuse.

By providing a free, easily accessible certification course on DHS' website, we can ensure that all youth-serving individuals like ballet and karate instructors, Sunday school teachers, preschool teachers and others have the tools to identify the signs of abuse, and know how to prevent and report it to the appropriate entity. This is all the more important now, as we've seen sadly an increase in domestic violence cases throughout the pandemic.

I am grateful to DHS for their support for this effort in 2020, and to the many committee colleagues and others throughout our chamber who supported its passage last session.

I respectfully request a favorable report of HB9. Thank you.