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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
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Support HB476

Family Law – Grandparent Visitation

Judiciary Committee

Very often today, grandparents have to play a significant role in the lives of their grandchildren. And while it's often some sort of unfortunate circumstance that leads to this, grandparent involvement can, and often is, depending on the facts of a particular case, be in the best interest of the child(ren) involved.

This bill seeks to add clarity to the circumstances in which a court may permit the awarding of visitation to grandparents. Specifically, the bill provides that a court may award visitation rights to grandparents if:

- both of the child's living parents consent to visitation;
- one of the child's living parents consents to visitation and the other parent is unable to consent; or
- both of the child's living parents are unable to consent to visitation, or
- Exceptional circumstances exist that demonstrate current or future detriment to the child absent visitation with the grandparent(s).

This will not abrogate the rights of biological parents established through decisions of the Maryland Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court of the United States.