

## Testimony in support of Senate Bill SB0566 - William Zwart.

Good afternoon, Honorable Chair and members of the committee,

My name is Will Zwart, and I am testifying in support of Senator Ready's bill for the simple reason that in this day and age, many individuals do not know what rights are, who has them, or where they came from.

The short and sweet answer is that rights are the authority to do certain things, granted to every human being under certain circumstances, from God.

Some will protest against this definition, claiming that there is no God. But if there is no God, there are no rights, for if rights do not come from God, they must come from the only other authority: government. If rights come from government and not from God, they are subjective, and therefore not rights at all.

We know that there are rights, and we know God exists, as it is written:

*"For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse." (Ro. 1:20).*

God grants everyone rights, and we see that God has granted parents the right – this is, authority – over their children:

*"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 'Honor your father and mother, that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.' Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." (Eph. 6:1-4).*

*"Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward." (Ps. 127:3).*

*"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you." (Ex. 20:12).*

*"If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and, though they discipline him, will not listen to them, then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city at the gate of the place where he lives, and they shall say to the elders of his city, 'This our son is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard.' Then all the men of the city shall stone him to death with stones. So you shall purge the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear, and fear." (Dt. 21:18-21).*

*“Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.” (Col. 3:20).*

*“Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching...” (Pr. 1:8).*

These are just some of the verses that testify to the right of parents to have authority over their children, to teach, train, and raise them.

This bill does not grant parental rights, for we have already seen that rights only come from God, and can only be taken away by Him. Regardless of whether or not this bill passes, therefore, parents will continue to have the right of authority over their children. This bill simply affirms parental rights, and communicates to the mothers and fathers of Maryland that you, the Maryland legislature, understand inalienable rights and seeks to protect them.

I therefore urge you to vote favorably on this bill, for as history greatly attests, governments that do not protect the rights of citizens – especially parents – always collapse, and their destruction is complete.

*“Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the LORD and against his anointed, saying, ‘Let us break their chains and throw off their shackles.’ The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them. He rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying, ‘I have installed my king on Zion, my holy mountain.’ I will proclaim the LORD’s decree: He said to me, ‘You are my son; today I have become your father. Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. You will break them with a rod of iron; you will dash them to pieces like pottery.’ Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear and celebrate his rule with trembling. Kiss his son, or he will be angry and your way will lead to your destruction, for his wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.” (Ps. 2:1-12).*