

## HB0666 – Family Law - Fundamental Rights

### Support

Almost 100 years ago in *Pierce v. the Society of Sisters*, Supreme Court Justice James. C. McReynolds wrote a “The child is not a mere creature of the State...” This ruling further stated that “those who nurture him and direct this destiny have the right, coupled with the high duty, to recognize and prepare him for additional obligations.” Despite this clear precedent, it seems more and more the State of Maryland would like to make every child a “mere creature of the state”.

Our obligation as parents is to raise our children by imparting our beliefs, our faith, our religions, our culture and our heritage onto our children. Every child has been entrusted to their parents via the creator of life, to be the primary people responsible to pass on those important lessons. We do not abdicate those rights or responsibilities merely because we are members of a broader society. Indeed, the broader society really should have no place in weighing in on those decisions in except in the extreme situations. Indeed, as stated in *Moore v. East Cleveland*, 431 U.S. 494(1977) “It is through the family that we inculcate and pass down many of our most cherished values, moral and cultural.”

This legislation formalizes these Supreme Court precedents in Maryland Law. I carried my children in my womb for nine months. I fed them from my body. I spent countless hours tending to every need, wiping every tear, anxious over every illness. I sat up nights just watching them sleep, watching them breathe, and just holding them close. I can spot them coming down with an illness. I can identify when they are tired, or hungry or depressed. I know when they are hiding things and when they need me. I am an expert in my child. I am in expert in my child in the way that no other person ever will be or ever can be.

This legislation formalizes in Maryland Law that parents are the experts of their children. We know what is best. We know what is right for our kids and we are the primary authority on our children. Our kids are not mere creatures of the State. They will be different, they will be raised differently they will have vastly different faiths, values and expectations for their futures. And, that is the way it is supposed to be. They have obligations far more weighty than to be mere citizens in the State of Maryland.

I urge you all to codify and solidify in Maryland Law the right and obligation of parents as the primary authority over the proper way to bring up their children.

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