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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
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Senator Justin Ready
SB 867 General Assembly- Fiscal Notes – Family Impact Statements

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

Senate Bill 867 as proposed would require legislation prepared by the Department of Legislative Services to include a family impact statement; the purpose of which will indicate whether a bill will have an impact on marriage, family stability and/or family welfare.

This week as we debated Senate Bill 744, Juvenile Law – Reform, one of our colleagues asked where in the bill does it make parents responsible for the children involved in these crimes? This is a very difficult issue to legislate. However, we can be proactive in helping parents and children never get into that kind of trouble in the first place.

Families take many shapes and sizes. A stable home life with, ideally, two involved, caring parents is one of the indicators of a young person's future success. You may have heard of the "Success Sequence." That is, those who 1) finish high school, 2) get a full-time job once you finish school and 3) get married before you have children, are less likely to end up in poverty ([What Does the Success Sequence Mean? | Institute for Family Studies \(ifstudies.org\)](https://www.ifstudies.org/what-does-the-success-sequence-mean/)). It's undeniably true that this can be harder for some more than others due to structural barriers and inequalities. That is exactly why we should be noting and evaluating this impact. When we consider legislation, each bill's fiscal note takes small business, equity, and local government impacts all into account. Family impact should be included in whether the legislation creates good public policy.

It is clear that adults and children alike are better off the more they are tied into strong communities headed by people in who love them and are invested in their welfare. Every human service, budgeting, and public safety proposal ought to be evaluated for how it will impact families. That is the reason for this bill.

I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 867.