

# **Amy Gilford Support for SB 867.pdf**

Uploaded by: Amy Gilford

Position: FAV



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February 29, 2024

The Honorable Senator Brian J. Feldman  
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee  
Miller Senate Office Building  
11 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Re: SB 867 General Assembly – Fiscal Notes – Family Impact Statements - SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Feldman and Committee Members,

If you care about kids - I know that each of you does, you have to care about marriage and families.

As the director of the state's first initiative dedicated to strengthening marriages and families, I write to ask you to give SB 867 a favorable report in committee on Friday, March 1.

**The impact** of marriage and family breakdown has a measurable, ripple effect which doesn't just impact, it slaps all areas of society. The wave of teen violence that continues to crush the cities and bleed into the rural areas, is second to none. Absentee fathers, rampant crime, high cost of living, disincentives to marry, 1 in 5 marriages are struggling – these are simply the tip of the iceberg when it comes to critical issues which impact how families live and do business in Maryland.

**Is the topic of children and poverty** a grave concern to you? I'm sure it is. The financial advantages to marriage, compared to being single, divorced, and separated—are among the most well-established relationships in the social sciences related to the impact of child wellbeing. I urge you to study the report released by our friends at the Maryland Family Institute which provides a fairly exhaustive look at the state of marriage and family in Maryland.

**When we consider the social and financial stresses** that families are already experiencing, and 99% of all small businesses are mom and pop owned, it would be valuable to carefully consider what the impact of new regulations and laws would have upon their stability and wellbeing. Healthy marriages and families make your job easier.

Government bodies must do everything in their power **to remove barriers and increase opportunities** to help Maryland citizens form and sustain healthy marriages and families which in turn create healthy communities and a healthier Maryland. Please give SB 867 a favorable review today.

Amy M. Gilford

*Amy M. Gilford*

Executive Director  
Maryland Marriage Initiative  
Marriage & Relationship Education Center



# **SB867Family Impact StmtWritten Test.pdf**

Uploaded by: Justin Ready

Position: FAV

JUSTIN READY  
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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 1, 2024

**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.

**SB 867\_FLSC\_UNF.pdf**

Uploaded by: Lindsay Parvis

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**To:** Members of Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

**From:** Family Law Section Council

**Date:** March 1, 2024

**Subject:** **Senate Bill 867:  
General Assembly – Fiscal Notes – Family Impact Statements**

**Position:** **OPPOSE/UNFAVORABLE**

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The Maryland State Bar Association (MSBA) Family Law Section Council (FLSC) **opposes Senate Bill 867: General Assembly – Fiscal Notes – Family Impact Statements.**

This testimony is submitted on behalf of the MSBA’s FLSC. The FLSC is the formal representative of the Family Law Section of the MSBA, which promotes the objectives of the MSBA by improving the administration of justice in the field of family and juvenile law and, at the same time, tries to bring together the members of the MSBA who are concerned with family and juvenile laws and in reforms and improvements in such laws through legislation or otherwise. The FLSC is charged with the general supervision and control of the affairs of the Section and authorized to act for the Section in any way in which the Section itself could act. The Section has over 1,200 attorney members.

While the FLSC is concerned with the impact of bills & laws on Maryland families, in all their shapes & sizes, SB867 goes too far – prioritizing families by marriage to the exclusion of others and inviting speculation about a bill’s impact.

**The FLSC urges an unfavorable report.**

Should you have any questions, please contact:

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