

HB 996 Senate Testimony.pdf

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Position: FAV

JENNIFER WHITE HOLLAND
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Health and Government
Operations Committee



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 21, 2024

**Oral Testimony in Support of House Bill 996
Consumer Protection - Consumer Council - Name Change**

Good afternoon Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Finance Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to present HB 996 for your consideration.

This bill would change the name of the Consumer Council to the Consumer Protection Commission in the Division of Consumer Protection in the Office of the Attorney General. As such, the nine members who are appointed to serve would be considered Commissioners. The request to change the name was discussed at previous Consumer Council meetings. As such, the Council and Office of the Attorney General is aware and in support of the name change.

The Consumer Council is responsible for advising the Division of Consumer Protection and serves as a voice for consumers, businesses, and the greater public. Given the important work that they do, changing the name will better enable them to communicate, educate, and engage Marylanders about the work they do and be seen as a resource.

In the House Economic Matters Committee, the Committee voted HB 996 favorable with amendment unanimously. On third reading in the House, this bill was voted favorable 135-1.

I respectfully request a **FAVORABLE** report.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. White Holland".

Delegate Jennifer White Holland

HB 996 - Consumer Council - CPD - Support (Senate)

Uploaded by: Linda Dorsey-Walker

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March 21, 2024

TO: The Honorable Pamela Beidle, Chair
Finance Committee

FROM: Steven M. Sakamoto-Wengel
Consumer Protection Counsel for Regulation, Legislation and Policy

RE: House Bill 996 – Consumer Protection – Consumer Council – Name
Change and Other Modifications (SUPPORT)

The Consumer Protection Division of the Office of the Attorney General (the “Division”) supports House Bill 996, sponsored by Delegate White Holland, which would change the name of the Consumer Council of Maryland to the Consumer Protection Commission.

The Consumer Council is an advisory body to the Consumer Protection Division, established by statute fifty years ago, with nine members appointed by the Governor, with 3 representing businesses, 3 representing consumers, and 3 representing the public. The Chief of the Division is an *ex officio* member. Among other things, the Council studies issues facing Maryland consumers and can issue reports and recommendations regarding those issues. The Council members also serve as liaisons between the Division and the sectors and organizations they represent and are encouraged to give talks about the Division and consumer protection to organizations and community groups.

The members of the Council determined that they can better perform those functions if the body’s name is changed to the Consumer Protection Commission. In particular, the addition of “Protection” to the name might provide greater clarity to the role of the advisory body and facilitate the body’s liaison functions.

Accordingly, the Consumer Protection Division requests that the Senate Finance Committee give HB 996 a favorable report.

cc: Members, Finance Committee
The Honorable Jennifer White Holland
Stephanie Baker, Chair, Consumer Council

HB 996 - Consumer Council - CPD - Support (Senate)

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