

**HB 1158 (FWA)**

**DATE: March 12, 2024**

**BILL: HB 1158 (FWA) (State Government – Attorney General – Reports)**

**COMMITTEE: Health and Government Operations**

**POSITION: Support HB 1158 with amendment**

Carroll County Public Library supports HB 1158 with amendment. Like all public libraries, CCPL supports publishing the Opinions of the Attorney General and the Annual Report online as this make them accessible for all Marylanders, however we respectfully request that HB 1158 be amended as follows:

The Attorney General annually shall [have published, in bound volume] **PUBLISH ON THE WEBSITE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL in accordance with the Maryland Uniform Electronic Legal Materials Act as codified in State Government, § 10-1601 to 1611.**

(State Government, § 6-108 (d))

The Maryland Uniform Electronic Legal Materials Act (UELMA) becomes effective when a publisher, in this case, the Office of the Attorney General, no longer makes its primary source materials available in print.

The purpose of the Act is to ensure that primary source law is

- (1) authenticated by providing a method to determine that it is unaltered.
- (2) preserved, either in electronic or print form.
- (3) accessible for use by the public permanently.

Reference to UELMA in HB 1158 will ensure that Attorney General Opinions and Reports published online are guaranteed the same level of trustworthiness traditionally provided by print publications.

An amendment to HB 1158 that ensures adherence to the provisions of UELMA will provide for a technology-neutral, outcomes-based approach that will ensure that online Attorney General Opinions and Reports will be preserved and made permanently available to the public in unaltered form.

Carroll County Public Library supports HB 1158 with amendment and strongly urges the Committee to approve HB 1158 with a favorable report with the suggested amendment.

Submitted by,

Andrea Berstler  
Executive Director  
Carroll County Public Library