

MARYLAND JUDICIAL CONFERENCE
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Hon. Matthew J. Fader
Chief Justice

187 Harry S. Truman Parkway
Annapolis, MD 21401

MEMORANDUM

TO: House Judiciary Committee
FROM: Legislative Committee
Suzanne D. Pelz, Esq.
410-260-1523
RE: House Bill 311
Child Support – Suspension of Driver’s Licenses
DATE: January 16, 2024
(2/1)
POSITION: Support

The Maryland Judiciary supports House Bill 311. This bill would amend the circumstances and process set out in Family Law Article, § 10-119 under which the Child Support Administration (CSA) may notify the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) of an individual’s child support arrearages in order to suspend the individual’s driver’s license or privilege to drive.

This bill would increase the operational efficiency of the court. Currently, persons are repeatedly suspended, restored, and res-suspended with a multitude of hearings required. This bill will help ensure suspensions are not used inappropriately and will streamline and target the process for the courts.

The Judiciary notes that it would be helpful to have a definition for the term “arrearage balance.” It is unclear whether “arrearage balance” is the entire arrearage owed or the most recent amount that the obligor has not paid. For example, if the obligor has a \$1,000 per month child support obligation, a \$250 per month arrearage payment obligation, and is \$10,000 in arrears, must the court find that the obligor has the ability to pay the entire \$10,000 arrearage balance (or is otherwise voluntarily impoverished) to determine that suspension is appropriate?

cc. Hon. Karen Simpson
Judicial Council
Legislative Committee
Kelley O’Connor