

House Bill 1298 - UNFAVORABLE
Judiciary Committee

Honorable Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Judiciary Committee;

Please give House Bill 1298, regarding the "Maryland Paternal Naming Rights Act," an Unfavorable report.

This bill is blatantly misogynistic. There should be no assumption whatsoever that a child having the father's surname is in the best interest of the child. If a father wanted his name on the birth certificate, the time to discuss such was with the mother before the baby was born. A child's biological mother is a known factor, and so the mother's surname should obviously be the one that takes precedence. With the agreement of the mother, the child's name can already be changed, including on the birth certificate.

The only positive thing that I can say about this bill is that there seems to be no requirement for the father's surname to be at the end of a child's name. To be clear, however, if the committee is determined to pass this bill, I ask that there be an amendment to state that the father's surname only become a middle name if the mother is opposed to the father's surname being added at all. There should be no complaints about that from the sponsor of this bill since it has been considered good enough for the mother's surname to be there.

Again, I urge an unfavorable report for House Bill 1298. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Debi Jasen
Pasadena, MD