

JUSTIN READY
Legislative District 5
Carroll County

MINORITY WHIP
Finance Committee



James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 315
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3683 · 301-858-3683
800-492-7122 Ext. 3683
Justin.Ready@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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SB 558 – General Assembly – Fiscal Notes – Family Impact Statement

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

Senate Bill 558 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.

In this bill, “Family” is defined as a group of family members by biological or legal bonds including spouses, foster families, stepfamilies and legal guardians/wards. Families take many shapes and sizes.

A stable home life with caring parents is one of the leading indicators of a young person's future success. The lack of caring parents or guardians put children into a difficult situation with health, emotional and economic disparities.

It’s undeniably true that these outcome disparities can be even worse for some groups due to structural barriers and inequalities. That is exactly why we should be noting and evaluating impacts when passing legislation.

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.

I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 558.