

Dear Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

This testimony is being submitted with Showing Up for Racial Justice Baltimore, a group of individuals working to move white folks as part of a multi-racial movement for equity and racial justice in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Howard County. I am also writing in collaboration with Out for Justice. I am a resident of **District 46. I am a workforce development professional in the City of Baltimore and I am a board member in my local Canton community association. I am testifying in support of Child support license suspension (exception) (HB0681).**

HB0681 bill forbids the suspension of a driver's license for failure to pay child support where the person makes less than 250% of the federal poverty guideline. Driver's license suspensions do not work as an enforcement mechanism for those who are living in poverty and simply do not have the ability to pay. They create a barrier to employment and make it difficult to be an involved and active parent. Further, the punishment can paradoxically make the parent in arrears less able to make further child-support payments. Suspending fewer licenses could even save the state money—when Washington State stopped suspending licenses for failure to pay non-moving violations, there were 500 fewer arrests for driving while suspended, which saved an estimated 4,500 hours of patrol officers' time.<sup>1</sup>

The current system disproportionately affects low-income parents and families. A New Jersey survey found that 42 percent of people with a history of suspension lost their jobs when they had their driving privileges suspended. Job loss was experienced across all income and age groups; however, it was most significant among low-income and younger drivers.<sup>2</sup> This bill could give lower-income noncustodial parents a better chance to get to work and have future ability to pay child support.

It is for these reasons that I am encouraging you to vote **in support of Child support-driver's license suspension (HB0681).**

Thank you for your time, service, and consideration.

Sincerely,

**John Preston Ford**  
**529 S East Ave, Baltimore, MD 21224**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/15/us/with-drivers-license-suspensions-a-cycle-of-debt.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nj.gov/transportation/business/research/reports/FHWA-NJ-2007-020-V1.pdf>