

THE COALITION TO PROTECT MARYLAND'S CHILDREN

Our Mission: To combine and amplify the power of organizations and citizens working together to keep children safe from abuse and neglect. We strive to secure budgetary and public policy resources to make meaningful and measurable improvements in safety, permanence, and wellbeing.



CPMC
COALITION TO PROTECT
MARYLAND'S CHILDREN

**HB0120 - Family Law - Child Support - Capacity of Minors
to File Action
House Judiciary Committee
January 30, 2025**

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children is a consortium of organizations and individuals formed in 1996 who are concerned about the care of Maryland's most vulnerable children and work together to promote meaningful child welfare reform. **CPMC urges a favorable report on HB0120 - Family Law - Child Support - Capacity of Minors to File Action.**¹

As advocates in the child welfare community, we understand the challenges minors face when choosing to become parents. Child support is critical because it ensures that both parents financially contribute to their child's basic needs like food, shelter, clothing, and education, regardless of their custody arrangement, providing financial stability for the child and minimizing the impact of separation on their wellbeing. Having access to routine funds also helps the custodial parent focus on the child's care without shouldering the entire financial burden alone.

Minor parents like adult parents are responsible for providing for the financial needs of their children. The children of minor parents are no less entitled to the support of their parents. Minor parents may not have someone they can rely on to file for children and should be able to file and maintain a child support action for the support of their children.

Children are no less entitled to support because their parents have not reached the age of majority.

For the above state reasons, the Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children **urges a favorable report on HB0120 - Family Law - Child Support - Capacity of Minors to File Action.**

¹ Members of CPMC represented by this written testimony include Center for Hope, Citizens Review Board for Children, Court Appointed Special Advocates – Baltimore County, MD Chapter – American Academy of Pediatrics, MD Association of Resources for Families & Youth, MD Legal Aid Bureau, MD Coalition Against Sexual Assault, MD Network Against Domestic Violence, and National Association of Social Workers – MD.