

BILL NO: House Bill 0275
TITLE: Family Law – Child Support – Multifamily Adjustment
COMMITTEE: Judiciary
HEARING DATE: February 20, 2025
POSITION: **SUPPORT**

House Bill 0275 would alter the definition of “actual adjusted income” in Maryland’s Child Support Statute, to account for other children for whom one or both of the parties are financially responsible. The Women’s Law Center of Maryland (WLC) supports HB 0275 as it will more realistically calculate child support orders in the many cases where one or both of the parties are also financially responsible for children who are not a part of the child support order at hand.

There have been repeated attempts to add this calculation into child support law in Maryland, with other iterations of this idea. HB 0275 was drafted in consultation with many stakeholders, including an economist and others who work in the social science field of child support, as well as Maryland practitioners of family law, and child support staff from around the state.

HB 0275 would apply to both parties, the payor and the payee. It uses a mathematical formula with an “allowance” for other children for whom the party is responsible and who spends at least 92 nights with that parent. This allowance is deducted from the party’s actual income before child support is calculated. The court would also be able to consider any other financial consideration as enunciated in the bill. And overall, the court would also be determining the best interests of the child at issue.

The WLC recognizes that sometimes parties to a child support case have financial responsibility for other children than the ones who are subject of a particular child support case. HB 0275 seeks to take this into account. We support the policy that child support orders should be realistic, and not cause a party to not be able to comply from the outset.

As such, The Women’s Law Center of Maryland urges a favorable report on House Bill 0275.

The Women’s Law Center of Maryland is a private, non-profit, legal services organization that serves as a leading voice for justice and fairness for women. It advocates for the rights of women through legal assistance to individuals and strategic initiatives to achieve systemic change, working to ensure physical safety, economic security, and bodily autonomy for women in Maryland.