



TESTIMONY FOR HB0681

Child Support - Driver's License Suspension for Arrearages and Court Orders

Bill Sponsor: Delegates Toles

Committee: Judiciary

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Aileen Alex, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0681 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Having gone through a divorce in Maryland myself, I know firsthand the fear and anxiety that comes with relying on an ex to do the right thing for a child and in Maryland drivers licenses of deadbeat parents can be suspended. However, this bill takes into account those parents who cannot legitimately afford child support. If their individual income for the current year is not greater than 250% of the federal poverty guidelines. However, this exemption does not apply if the obligor was determined to be voluntarily impoverished at the time the most recent child support order was entered.

While this is a gut wrenching situation, HB0681 is a game-changer for parents in similar situations. This bill ensures that individuals who are significantly behind on their child support payments face real consequences. It proposes altering the circumstances under which the Child Support Administration may notify the Motor Vehicle Administration of an individual's child support arrearages, leading to the suspension of the individual's driver's license or driving privileges. Additionally, it requires the court, after establishing a child support order, to send a copy of the guideline calculation and the order to the Child Support Administration.

This bill is crucial because it promotes accountability and ensures that parents fulfill their financial responsibilities to their children. By implementing these measures, HB0681 helps enforce child support orders and provides a robust mechanism to address non-compliance. It supports the well-being of children and families by ensuring that child support payments are made, ultimately benefiting all Maryland residents.

Maryland is one of the most expensive states to live in, and we cannot allow parents to shirk their responsibilities to our most vulnerable and valuable members of society due to lifestyle changes. The Maryland Legislative Coalition strongly supports this bill and recommends a FAVORABLE report in committee.