

JOTF JOB OPPORTUNITIES TASK FORCE

Advocating better skills, jobs, and incomes

Testimony for House Bill 681

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

TO: Hon. Luke Clippinger, Chair, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee

FROM: Job Opportunities Task Force

DATE: February 20, 2025

POSITION: Support

The Job Opportunities Task Force (JOTF) is an independent, nonprofit organization that develops and advocates policies and programs to increase the skills, job opportunities, and incomes of low-wage workers and job seekers in Maryland. **JOTF supports House Bill 681, which would exempt those who earn 250% of the federal poverty level (≈\$38,000) or less from having their driver's license suspended for child support arrearages.**

Many jobs for those living in Baltimore city are in surrounding counties and consequently to get to these jobs, a car and a driver's license is required. If a person does not have a car or a driver's license they cannot get to their job, and without their job they have no income, and without their income they cannot pay their child support. Thus taking a low income person's driver license away is harmful to the obligor, the custodial parent and the child. It is counterproductive.

A Report from the Abell Foundation ([see here](#)) discusses in detail how suspending the driver's license of a low income individual hurts the obligor, the child and the family.

More than 20,000 obligors had their driver's license suspended in FY23, harming them and their families pursuant to existing law. It also harmed their employers, the state's economy, and the state's tax base.

The 250% language as a basis for the obligor to object and request an investigation and a hearing as proposed by HB 681 would become just one more factor that in practice does not occur. That is the reason why Senator Watson has brought this legislation forward in the Judicial Proceedings committee for multiple years and the committee has consistently shown that it concurs by passing out this legislation multiple years in a row. JOTF requests that the Judiciary Committee join them this year.

For these reasons, JOTF supports House Bill 681 and urges a favorable report.

For more information, contact:

Mark Woodard / Senior Public Policy Advocate / Mark@jotf.org