

HON. STACY A. MAYER
CIRCUIT COURT
JUDGE
BALTIMORE COUNTY
CHAIR

HON. RICHARD SANDY
CIRCUIT COURT
JUDGE
FREDERICK COUNTY
VICE-CHAIR



KELLEY O'CONNOR
ASSISTANT STATE COURT
ADMINISTRATOR
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS
AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS
P: (410) 260-1560

SUZANNE PELZ, ESQ.
SNR. GOVT. RELATIONS AND
PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER
P: (410)260-1523

MARYLAND JUDICIAL COUNCIL LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

MEMORANDUM

TO: Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee
FROM: Legislative Committee
Suzanne D. Pelz, Esq.
410-260-1523
RE: Senate Bill 144
Public Information Act – Personnel Records of Elected Officials
and Joint Ethics Committee Records
DATE: February 4, 2026
(2/11)
INFORMATIONAL COMMENT PAPER

The Judiciary respects the separation of powers doctrine and acknowledges the policy-making authority of the legislative branch. As such, the Judiciary has no position on the policy aims of this legislation.

The Judiciary has concerns with the language, however, as it applies to judges and allows access to any records relating to an **investigation** of misconduct. The Judiciary would respectfully request that language be added to the provisions to provide that there must have been wrongdoing or misconduct found to allow access to such records.

The Judiciary has its own ethical body which maintains public confidence in the integrity, independence and impartiality of judges. The Maryland Judicial Disabilities Commission, rather than the State Ethics Committee, addresses complaints filed against judges which allege sanctionable conduct, disability or impairment. Judges can be subject to frivolous complaints filed with the Judicial Disabilities Commission for reasons none other than they may have ruled against the filer in their civil or criminal case. For that reason, Maryland rules have established comprehensive provisions which maintain that investigatory information is confidential – See Rules 16-903, 16-912 and 18-407.

The Judiciary is happy to work with Sponsor on language to address these concerns.

cc. Hon. William Folden
Judicial Council
Legislative Committee
Kelley O'Connor