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Bill: HB 296 - Maryland Public Ethics Law - Financial Disclosure Statements - State Officials of and Candidates to be a State Official of the Judicial Branch

Committee: House Government, Labor, and Elections

Position: Favorable

Date: February 20, 2026

The Maryland State Bar Association (MSBA) **supports** House Bill 296 - Maryland Public Ethics Law - Financial Disclosure Statements - State Officials of and Candidates to be a State Official of the Judicial Branch. Through its advocacy committees and various practice-specific sections, MSBA monitors and takes positions on legislation that protects the legal profession, preserves the integrity of the judicial system, and ensures access to justice for Marylanders.

MSBA supports this legislation that shifts responsibility for maintaining and implementing financial disclosures to the Judiciary for judicial candidates and judges. This proposed change supports recently-enacted legislation that strengthens judicial security and protects personal information, as financial statements often contain sensitive information that could be used to threaten or harass judicial officers. MSBA supports the bill's specific inclusion of judicial candidates' information, as these individuals should receive the same security protections as sitting judges, given their public presence and visibility throughout the nomination and election process. The bill balances the right to transparency and public access to information while ensuring administrative overview and a more streamlined approach to these documents directly through the Administrative Office of the Courts.

MSBA supports HB 296 and requests a favorable report.

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