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Support FAV SB0190 Estates and Trusts - Interpretation of Wills - Evidence of Intent (Granny's Law)

Dear Judicial Proceedings Committee Chair, Vice Chair and members,

I am writing this letter in support of SB0190 Granny's Law. My family and I appeared before you last year during the 2025 Maryland General Assembly Legislative Session and again we ask for your committee's favorable report. None of what my daughter has walked through is in my mother-in-law's will and hence should never have happened. I am Jennifer Johnson's mother and I lost my husband, Jennifer's beloved father, to a heart attack several years ago. I have also lost many friends and family members to Alzheimer's, Cancer and Cardiovascular disease. Additionally, I spent a good part of my professional career working in the State of Maryland juvenile justice system so I have seen first-hand some of the mental illness that is affecting the African American Community.

Jennifer was an excellent caregiver for her grandmother. Jennifer and her grandmother were inseparable while she was alive and Jennifer facilitated services for her such as getting her hair and nails done and making sure that she attended entertainment and church services whenever possible, as well as attending to all her medical and everyday living needs.

I am proud of my daughter for taking a stand and trying to honor her grandmother's wishes. However, I was horrified at how the courts handled my daughter and I did everything in my power to quickly get her out of a situation that should have never happened. It goes without saying that my daughter has never been in trouble with the law in her life. As the mother of Jennifer, who was incarcerated per Judge Juliet Fisher's orders in September 2022, (while Jennifer's best friend Kim was dying of cancer) I spent several days searching my daughter's home, trying to piece together information to satisfy the Judge's court order. I also visited the bank where my mother-in-law kept her accounts, to no avail, as the bank would not provide any information due to privacy laws. Jennifer's lawyer asked me to search every source possible to locate any/all financial information available to provide him to satisfy the Court's orders.

In my search for the required information, I probably didn't find everything, but I did follow the court order and tried to find "any and all" information. When I wasn't searching for said information, I was sad and feeling depressed and extremely concerned about my daughter's wellbeing. Jennifer had never been confined in a correctional facility, never been accused of a crime or subject to court hearings and legal orders before. I prayed that the court would have mercy on my daughter and release her from confinement immediately before this experience had any lasting negative impact. I had little or no knowledge about how the Baltimore County Court/Penal Systems . I searched for information when I or close friends could visit Jennifer. I was appalled to find out that I couldn't visit her until she had been confined for more than a week. Telephone calls were only allowed once a day and the length of the calls were limited to 5 minutes. I could only pray that Jennifer would be OK. This ordeal and the way the courts handled my daughter and her grandmother's affairs was beyond disturbing and inflicted unnecessary chaos and upheaval in all of our lives. I ask for your committee's full support for this legislation, SB0190 Granny's Law to help bring justice to our family and to prevent anything like this from ever happening to anyone else in our state.

Sincerely,

Sandra A. Johnson