



April 1, 2026

Senate Judiciary Committee

**Senate/House Bill 1258 — Child Placement Services – Advertising by Unlicensed Person – Prohibition**

**Position:** SUPPORT

Chair Bartlett, Vice Chair Davis, and Members of the Committee:  
Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 1258: Child Placement Services- Advertising by Unlicensed Person Prohibition.

My name is Meshan Lehmann, and I am a licensed Maryland social worker with ten years of experience working with expectant parents, adoptive families, and children navigate the complexities of adoption. I am here because I have seen the harm that occurs when unlicensed adoption facilitators market services in Maryland.

Two years ago, our agency was called in to address the aftermath of an adoption case involving unethical practices. An expectant mother from Maryland saw a sponsored online ad from an out-of-state agency promising financial assistance. She was flown to another state, matched with an adoptive family, and completed the adoption process there.

What that agency failed to do was verify that she was legally married-a critical legal factor. Six months later, her husband asserted his parental rights. The adoption was overturned, and the child was returned to Maryland.

The devastation was immeasurable. The husband endured the trauma of discovering his child had been placed without their knowledge and endured a difficult legal battle for 6 months. The adoptive family experienced profound grief and financial hardship. And the mother was caught in the middle of a painful, preventable legal crisis- one that began with a targeted online ad.

Unfortunately, this is not an isolated case.

When unlicensed facilitators are involved, speed often takes priority over legal protection. I have seen Maryland mothers give up the safeguards our state provides and proceed under less

protective laws. With shorter revocation periods and little post-adoption support, the risk of coercion, legal disruption, and lasting harm increases for everyone involved.

The bottom line is this: If a facilitator does not know Maryland law, they cannot provide accurate information. And if they cannot provide accurate information, they cannot ensure informed consent.

House Bill 1258 ensures that those marketing adoption services in our state are licensed, accountable, and knowledgeable about Maryland law.

Thank you

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Meshan Lehmann". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Meshan Lehmann  
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