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Bill: SB 542 – Courts – Former Judge – Temporary Assignment

Committee: Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

Position: Favorable

Date: February 16, 2026

The Maryland State Bar Association (MSBA) **supports** Senate Bill 542 - Courts – Former Judge – Temporary Assignment, altering eligibility for a former judge to be recalled for temporary assignment. 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 support the ability of a judge who has gone through one successful election cycle, spent several years on the bench, and completed annual judicial trainings to continue to support the needs of the Maryland Judiciary in cases, settlements, and other court proceedings, in this limited case of being defeated in a subsequent election. Many judges in this category have also gone through the thorough vetting and appointment process with input from MSBA and other bar association, Judicial Nominating Commissions, and appointment by the Governor.

The bill does not remove any other restrictions on serving in a temporary capacity, as judges who were removed or involuntarily retired, voluntarily retired by reason of disability, censured by the Supreme Court of Maryland following a recommendation of the Commission of Judicial Disabilities, and those who practice law are barred from this type of work. These safeguards against judicial misconduct are preserved. Any judge serving in a temporary capacity must maintain ethical standards and follow the code of judicial conduct.

SB 542 keeps the focus of a judge serving in a temporary capacity on their judicial fitness and fills the need for additional judges with relevant experience to support the existing caseload in Maryland courts.

For these reasons, MSBA respectfully urges a favorable report on Senate Bill 542.

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