



Wes Moore, Governor • Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor • Stacy L. Rodgers, Acting Secretary

April 2, 2026

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr., Chair
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East Miller, Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: TESTIMONY ON HB 1005 - FAMILY LAW - CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT -
REPORTING (SURVIVOR REPORTING REFORM ACT) - POSITION: FAVORABLE**

Dear Chair Smith and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

The Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS) thanks the Committee for its consideration and respectfully requests a favorable report on House Bill 1005 (HB 1005). HB 1005 was reported favorably with amendments that DHS supports and passed 133-0.

With offices in every one of Maryland's jurisdictions, DHS provides preventative and supportive services, economic assistance, and meaningful connections to employment development and career opportunities to assist Marylanders in reaching their full potential. Our Social Services Administration (SSA) implements the Child Protective Services (CPS) program which is affected by HB 1005. HB 1005 would partially codify existing practice, and expand the structure and reporting mechanisms for child victims who are now adults.

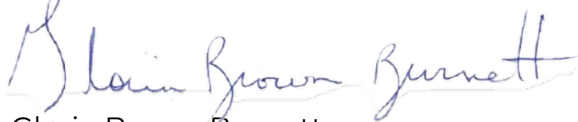
HB 1005 strengthens the process used by mandated reporters for accounts of abuse or neglect disclosed by adults who were children at the time the alleged incident occurred. The bill addresses the lack of a clear and separate process for victims who are now adults, and ensures the department handles these matters with care and consideration. Currently, Maryland law requires these reports of abuse or neglect, but lacks a specialized process to meet the unique needs of adult survivors. The bill addresses this gap by requiring the Department to consult with survivors and by mandating the report to document how and whether the survivor would like a subsequent investigation to proceed. This framework ensures mandated reporters fulfill their statutory duties while granting adult survivors meaningful input into whether a formal investigation proceeds.

Mandated reporting is defined in [Family Law § 5-704](#) and interpreted to mean that all mandated reporters must submit reports of suspected child abuse and neglect, even if the individual is now an adult. Today, there is minimal structural difference in how reports are submitted, processed, and investigated when the alleged victim is a child or an adult. The shared process causes confusion among some mandated reporters, particularly health practitioners, where the response from the Department should depend on whether the alleged victim of abuse or neglect is a child or an adult.

When an adult shares their experience of childhood abuse or neglect with a mandated reporter, there are additional factors taken into account prior to the Department launching an investigation. There are some scenarios where the adult may still live with the abuser and needs mail regarding an investigation sent to a different address. An adult victim may also prefer to avoid an investigation, or an investigation could be too painful for them to relive in the detail necessary to assist with the investigation. HB 1005 would offer adult victims additional options for reporting abuse or neglect, as well as privacy and greater control of their experience.

We thank Delegate Forbes for bringing HB 1005 forward and appreciate the opportunity to provide favorable testimony to the Committee for consideration during your deliberations. If you require additional information, please contact Justin Hayes, Acting Director of Government Affairs, at justin.hayes1@maryland.gov.

In service,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gloria Brown Burnett". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gloria" being the most prominent.

Gloria Brown Burnett
Deputy Secretary for Operations