

**SB0481**

**Position: FAV**

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## **Written Testimony in Support of Time Taken, Time Back**

Good afternoon, Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the committee. Thank you for your service and for the opportunity to speak today.

My name is Brian Fitzgerald. I am a father, and like everyone here, I am also someone's child.

There is one truth that crosses every party and every belief: **every child understands love as time.**

Not legal language. Not explanations. Just time.

When a court issues a visitation order, adults see a schedule. But to a child, it feels like a promise:

"You matter, and your time with both parents is protected."

The problem this bill solves is simple. When that court-ordered time is taken from a child, and nothing restores it, the system teaches that child that promises made to them can disappear.

While adults wait for hearings and motions, children don't understand procedure. They ask themselves:

"Did I do something wrong?"

"Am I the reason they're gone?"

Time Taken, Time Back is built on a simple, child-focused principle: when time is taken from a child, that time belongs to the child, and it should be restored.

This bill makes court orders meaningful, provides a practical remedy for judges, and

protects children from the emotional cost of lost time.

I respectfully urge your favorable consideration of Time Taken, Time Back — for every child in Maryland whose time deserves protection.

Thank you.