

MIKE MCKAY
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Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties



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Judicial Proceedings Committee
Executive Nominations Committee

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
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Joint Committees
Administrative, Executive,
and Legislative Review
Children, Youth, and Families
Program Open Space and Agricultural
Land Preservation

Williamsport Office
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Williamsport, Maryland

Senate Bill 481 – Family Law - Denial or Interference with Visitation Rights

February 18, 2026

Dear Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Committee,

Senate Bill 481 strengthens Maryland’s custody and visitation laws by ensuring meaningful remedies when a court finds that visitation has been unjustifiably denied or interfered with. Current law merely authorizes courts to reschedule missed visitation, which can result in inconsistent outcomes and insufficient relief for the aggrieved parent and child. By requiring courts to order compensatory visitation—of the same type and double the duration, while remaining subject to the best interests of the child—this bill promotes accountability and reinforces the integrity of court-ordered visitation arrangements.

Importantly, SB 481 does not diminish judicial discretion or the paramount consideration of a child’s best interests. Instead, it establishes a clear, predictable baseline remedy while preserving the court’s authority to impose additional conditions, modify custody or visitation orders, or assess costs and counsel fees when appropriate. This balanced approach deters willful noncompliance, reduces repeated litigation over denied visitation, and provides children with greater stability and continuity in their relationships with both parents. For these reasons, Senate Bill 481 represents a fair and necessary improvement to Maryland family law and deserves a favorable report.

I thank you for your time and I urge a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike McKay'.

Senator Mike McKay
Representing the Appalachia Region of Maryland
Serving Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties