

My name is **Nunyo Demasio**. I submit this written testimony in support of **Granny's Law (SB0190)** and respectfully urge the Judicial Proceedings Committee to support its passage. I offer this perspective as a private citizen, informed by personal experience with legal systems affecting older adults in vulnerable circumstances.

In matters involving aging or impaired individuals, intent is often expressed over time and across multiple forms—through communications, conduct, and long-standing relationships—not solely in a single document executed at a single moment. When courts are required to treat the text of a will as conclusive, even where credible extrinsic evidence demonstrates a different and consistent intent, outcomes can diverge sharply from the decedent's actual intent. Where an individual has expressed consistent wishes over years of conduct and communication, rigid adherence to a single document may defeat rather than effectuate that intent.

Granny's Law responds to this problem in a measured and principled way. By authorizing courts, under defined circumstances, to consider reliable extrinsic evidence, the legislation does not weaken testamentary planning. It strengthens it—by ensuring that estate plans are interpreted in accordance with the decedent's demonstrated purpose rather than frustrated by technical rigidity.

The bill's framework appropriately balances flexibility with restraint. Judicial discretion is bounded by evidentiary safeguards and defined triggering circumstances, protecting against manipulation while preserving predictability for those who engage in long-term planning. Flexibility of this kind is not a departure from the rule of law; it is a means of ensuring that the law carries out its intent rather than elevating form over substance.

The provision authorizing personal representatives to seek accountability when a legacy is being used inconsistently with its intended purpose reflects a realistic understanding of vulnerability and misuse. Oversight mechanisms of this kind are not punitive; they are protective, and they deter conduct that might otherwise undermine a decedent's objectives.

It is worth noting that, in prior sessions, opposition to this legislation came from institutional actors such as the Register of Wills, the Maryland Judiciary, and the Maryland Bar Association—entities that represent established systems. While those perspectives are important, systems are not infallible. The probate process has, for many years, produced outcomes that can stray from intent and harm families. Granny's Law represents a careful, overdue correction to that systemic problem.

Legislation that permits courts to honor clearly demonstrated intent—without authorizing wholesale revision of testamentary documents—reflects a balanced and humane approach. It reinforces planning, protects vulnerable individuals, and promotes outcomes aligned with what decedents actually wanted.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony. I respectfully request the Committee's support for **Granny's Law (SB0190)**.

Nunyo Demasio