



## **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 412**

### **Child Support - Suspension of Driver's Licenses**

TO: Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee

FROM: Dwan Burton, Deputy Director of Out For Justice

DATE: February 12th, 2026

My name is Dwan Burton, and I am the Deputy Director of Out for Justice, Inc. (OFJ), a Baltimore-based grassroots organization led by people directly impacted by the criminal legal system. We first thank the committee for passing House Bill 681 last year, which created an exception to the license suspension statute for lower-income parents, many of whom are in our member base. We strongly support House Bill 412, which clarifies when it is appropriate to suspend a driver's license for child support arrearages, ensuring this enforcement tool is used appropriately.

As stated, Out for Justice has a large membership base of individuals who have returned home from incarceration and have struggled with child support arrears, leading to garnishments and license suspensions. When we've worked with the Child Support Administration on behalf of our members, we were met with stiff opposition, long wait times, and agents who were apathetic to the struggles of non-custodial parents. What was worse was the indiscriminate license suspensions of some of our members who were disabled or actually had custody of the child.

Despite having custody of his other kids, my son's father routinely faced license suspension despite tireless trips and calls to the child support administration to correct the record to no avail. The CSA license suspension merry-go-round ultimately meant I bore the brunt of managing his transportation to work and to pick up his other children, as well as the one we share. Which was a massive upset to our dynamic and daily routines.

The suspension tool is designed to prevent those with the money to pay but who actively choose voluntary impoverishment from the privilege of driving. Thanks to the automated system, however, suspensions are routine and random, without factoring in the driver's circumstances, ability to pay, or even whether they are complying with a court or administrative order.

House Bill 412 defines when it is appropriate to suspend a license and outlines numerous factors that make it inappropriate. This should provide the administration with guidance on using their tool effectively to benefit the family. For these reasons, I urge a favorable report.