

THE COALITION TO PROTECT MARYLAND'S CHILDREN

Our Mission: To combine and amplify the power of organizations and citizens working together to keep children safe from abuse and neglect. We strive to secure budgetary and public policy resources to make meaningful and measurable improvements in safety, permanence, and wellbeing.



HB1258 - Child Placement Services - Advertising by Unlicensed Person - Prohibition

House Judiciary Committee

February 26, 2026

Position: SUPPORT

The Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children is a consortium of organizations and individuals formed in 1992 who are concerned about the care of Maryland's most vulnerable children and work together to educate and promote meaningful child welfare reform. **CPMC urges a favorable report on HB1258 - Child Placement Services - Advertising by Unlicensed Person – Prohibition.**

Adoption advertising can be used to solicit or steer vulnerable individuals without proper safeguards. Even when the stated goal is “help,” the absence of licensure and oversight increases risk of coercion, misrepresentation, and improper financial inducements. The National Council for Adoption has specifically highlighted that unregulated or unlicensed adoption intermediaries and out-of-state entities have been prominent in adoption advertising and warns that weak enforcement allows illegal activity to persist.

HB 1258 prohibits a person from advertising adoption services in Maryland unless the person is a local department or a child placement agency licensed by the Social Services Administration. This legislation authorizes our state attorney general to pursue actions for violations. Maryland families should be able to trust that anyone advertising services is subject to licensing standards, oversight, and enforcement. This legislation ensures the public is not misled by entities that look legitimate online but are not accountable to Maryland's licensing framework.

It is for these reasons that the Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children **urges a favorable report on HB1258 - Child Placement Services - Advertising by Unlicensed Person – Prohibition.**¹

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¹ Members of CPMC represented by this written testimony include – the American Academy of Pediatrics - Maryland Chapter, Child Justice, Center for Hope, Citizen's Review Board for Children, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA - Baltimore County), Maryland Association of Resources for Families and Youth (MARFY), Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence, National Association of Social Workers – MD (NASW), the State Council on Child Abuse & Neglect (SCCAN).