

Crystal Peters  
HB 25  
Oppose  
Judiciary Committee  
January 27, 2026

Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Crystal Peters, and I am a Maryland mother. I am submitting testimony in opposition to House Bill 25.

I come to you not as a legal expert, but as a parent who has already lived through the kind of situation this bill would make more common and more dangerous.

My husband passed away, and during and after his life, his mother treated me with hostility and disrespect. After his death, rather than supporting our family in our grief, she attempted to file for custody of my children despite having no legal standing. On the advice of my attorney, I cut contact with her for the safety and well-being of my family. She continued contacting me anyway. I sent a cease and desist letter. She still persisted. I ultimately had to seek a peace order and file harassment charges just to create boundaries and protect my household.

Even then, the harassment charges were dropped after she portrayed herself as simply a “sad grandmother.” I was nearly denied a peace order because the court had to pause to consider whether grandparents had rights. That moment made something very clear to me: grandparents already receive sympathy and deference in the system, while parents are forced to defend reasonable safety decisions.

HB 25 would make this worse. It would make it easier for grandparents to take parents to court and harder for parents to set boundaries – even when those boundaries are based on safety, emotional well-being, or long-standing conflict. This bill assumes that court-ordered visitation is harmless, but litigation itself is harmful to children. It forces families back into conflict and puts children in the middle of adult disputes.

I am a fit parent. I have the right and the responsibility to decide who is safe and appropriate in my children’s lives. That is not a decision that should be second-guessed by the courts unless a parent is unfit. After losing my husband, the last thing my family needed was to spend thousands of dollars on attorneys to prove that I was making the right decisions for my own children.

Grandparents who want relationships with grandchildren should build them through trust, respect, and healthy behavior — not through court orders.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to give HB 25 an unfavorable report.