

## Board Members

*Giulia M. Hodge*  
**Executive Director**

*Greg Birney*  
**Interim President**

*Mary Rhodes*  
**Treasurer**

*Ruth Bilas*  
**Secretary**

*Emily Falone*

*Maryann Othello*

*Janice Palmer*

*Shane Polk*

## Other Board Members

*Paul Elwood*  
**President and Founding  
Member**  
2016-2018

January 29, 2026

### **Madame Chair Bartlett and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,**

On behalf of CASA of Cecil County, we respectfully submit testimony in support of House Bill 137, which establishes clear qualifications for court-appointed child custody evaluators.

CASA volunteers serve as the voice of a child's best interests in some of the most complex and high-conflict custody and visitation cases. The recommendations made by custody evaluators carry significant weight in judicial decision-making and can have lasting impacts on a child's safety, stability, and well-being. HB 137 appropriately ensures that individuals conducting these evaluations possess the professional credentials, training, and subject-matter expertise necessary to assess trauma, abuse, family dynamics, and child development.

By setting consistent standards while allowing limited judicial discretion where appropriate, this legislation promotes fairness, accountability, and confidence in the custody evaluation process. Most importantly, it helps ensure that court decisions are informed by qualified professionals with a demonstrated understanding of the challenges faced by vulnerable children.

For these reasons, CASA of Cecil County urges a favorable report on House Bill 137.

Respectfully submitted,  
CASA of Cecil County



Scan to sign up for  
our newsletter!



CASA of Cecil County is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation, ID# 52-1734508

