



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony of Senator Jill P. Carter
In Favor of SB1006 - Child Support – Suspension of Payments and
Arrears for Incarcerated Obligor
– Modifications
Before the Judicial Proceedings Committee
on March 12, 2020**

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

This bill, SB 1006, aims to bring Maryland in line with recent federal regulations which require states to review or adjust child support orders if the obligor will be incarcerated for more than 180 days. Federal regs require it and this is simply good policy.

As the law stands, an obligor has to have been sentenced to 18 months or more before payments are suspended and arrearages stop accruing. As you can imagine, after even a year of non-payment due to incarceration, the arrearages can appear insurmountable. Experience shows that the greater the debt burden on the obligor, the greater the likelihood that they will simply stop paying. This, in turn, increases enforcement action which is a further burden on an already overloaded child support system. To be clear, this does not forgive any of the obligation, it simply stops it from getting worse while the non-custodial parent is incapable of paying.

Further, as the fiscal note points out, if Maryland does not modify its rules, it risks losing federal child support funding. This bill is otherwise revenue neutral.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report on SB1006.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jill P. Carter". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Jill P. Carter