

MARYLAND JUDICIAL CONFERENCE
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Hon. Mary Ellen Barbera
Chief Judge

187 Harry S. Truman Parkway
Annapolis, MD 21401

MEMORANDUM

TO: House Judiciary Committee
FROM: Legislative Committee
Suzanne D. Pelz, Esq.
410-260-1523
RE: House Bill 311
Courts – Court Dog and Child Witness Program - Established
DATE: January 22, 2020
(2/6)
POSITION: Support

The Maryland Judiciary supports House Bill 311. This bill would establish Court Dog and Child Witness Programs in each circuit court on a voluntary basis.

The Judiciary supported the creation of the pilot program in 2016 which is now fully operational in both circuit courts. This pilot reduces the potential traumatic impact of giving testimony for child witnesses. The Judiciary continues to support this important endeavor and the opportunity for other jurisdictions to participate if they have the necessary resources.

cc. Hon. Michael Malone
Judicial Council
Legislative Committee
Kelley O'Connor