

Members of the Judiciary Committee:

I'm giving testimony today to express my strong support for HB1242, the Fundamental Parental Rights bill, and to urge you to vote in favor of this bill. This bill protects the crucially important and fundamental rights of parents to direct the care and welfare of their children and make decisions in matters of health, education, and upbringing.

Each family and each child is unique, with unique needs and challenges. Parents are uniquely qualified to know what these challenges, attributes, and circumstances are and to act accordingly in the best interests of their children. No individual or institution is better informed, more invested, or better equipped to meet the fundamental needs of a child than her parents.

In the rare circumstance when a child is abused or neglected, the state has existing remedies to help that child without usurping or overriding the rights of *all* parents inappropriately through legislation. This bill safeguards against any and all individuals or institutions which would seek to usurp or undermine fundamental parental rights and parental authority. Please support this important bill which protects parents, families, and children in Maryland.

Many thanks,

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