



State of Maryland
Office of the Attorney General

February 9, 2021

TO: The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr., Chair, Judicial Proceedings
Committee

FROM: Carrie J. Williams, Assistant Attorney General

RE: Attorney General's Support for SB 505

The Attorney General urges the Judicial Proceedings Committee to report favorably on Senate Bill 505. Senate Bill 505 creates a “continuing course of conduct” modality of first-degree physical child abuse, similar to the continuing course of conduct statute for child sexual abuse.

Under current law, a caregiver who repeatedly abuses a child faces only second-degree child abuse charges unless prosecutors can show that a single incident of abuse caused “severe physical injury.” Multiple counts of second degree child abuse can be equally difficult to prove where a child is too young to provide information about the timing and incidents of abuse.

Senate Bill 505 will allow serial child abusers to be convicted of first-degree child abuse—a crime of violence. It provides additional protection for the most vulnerable victims. The Attorney General urges the Judicial Proceedings Committee to issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 505.

cc: Members of the Committee