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To: Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
From: Phillip Robinson  
Date: February 1, 2022  
Subject: **STATEMENT IN SUPPORT TO SB 69**

**ON BEHALF OF MY CLIENTS WHO ARE PARTIES TO LITIGATION IN ALL OF MARYLAND'S COURTS, I URGE THE COMMITTEE TO SUPPORT SB 69 AS A LIMITED EFFORT TO MODERNIZE THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON RULES OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE.**

Last summer the Maryland Judiciary launched a series of “listening sessions” as part of its Committee on Equal Justice. SB 69 is an effort to address some issues which were shared at the listening session on Civil Proceedings. The legislation is not intended to subsume the authority granted to the Court of Appeals to establish rules governing Maryland court proceedings. However, the legislation is intended for the purpose of making sure broad stakeholders of all constituencies in the Maryland judiciary system have a vote and not just a voice in that process and all key constituencies are represented in that process.

The General Assembly authorized the creation of the Rules Committee long ago. Cts. & Jud. Proc. § 13-301. It also has expressly authorized the employment of staff and payment of certain expenses. Cts. & Jud. Proc. §§ 13-302-1303. So, it is reasonable that the General Assembly can also provide other general guidance for the management of the Rules Committee as intended by SB 69 to ensure that that to process by which rules governing Maryland court proceedings are drafted and amended without bias, conscious or unconscious, so that fair, efficient, and effective justice for all of Maryland is carried out.

To carry out the comments presented to the Committee on Equal Justice last summer, SB 69 aims to ensure that the Rules Committee: (i) provides equal and balanced representation from a broader range of voices; (ii) ensures independence and avoidance of private party financial influence upon members; and (iii) establishes basic rules for good governance.

**FOR THESE REASONS, I ENCOURAGE THE COMMITTEE TO SUPPORT AND VOTE FAVORABLE ON SB 69.**