



School of Law
Center for Families,
Children and the Courts

**Senate Committee on Judicial Proceedings
Testimony of the University of Baltimore School of Law
Center for Families, Children and the Courts**

Professor Barbara Babb, Director
Gloria Danziger, Senior Fellow
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SB689: Education – Domestic Violence – Reasonable Corporal Punishment – Limitations

Position: Support

March 3, 2010

Dear Chair Frosh and members of the Committee:

The University of Baltimore Law School's Center for Children, Families and the Courts (CFCC) subscribes to a therapeutic, interdisciplinary model of family law jurisprudence. We believe that legal tools should foster practices and procedures with a positive impact on children and their families.

SB 689 takes an appropriate stand against domestic violence. We oppose definitions of corporal punishment that allow striking children in ways that cause physical pain or emotional harm. Our laws simply must forbid shaking children, throwing children, or the use of objects to hit children. We are united with a wide array of groups that also take this position.

Progress has been made in schools, where corporal punishment is now banned in the majority of states. When we compare our protection of children to that of other countries, we find that more than fifteen European countries have banned corporal punishment entirely. (*We don't hit animals; why do we hit children?* By Susan Bitensky, the Baltimore Sun, Nov. 22, 2006.)

We urge you to support SB 689 and continue the march toward safeguarding our children's bodies and psyches from violent acts.

Thank you.

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