

SENATE BILL 101

D1, D2

(0lr0954)

ENROLLED BILL

— *Judicial Proceedings/Judiciary* —

Introduced by **Senators Simonaire, Beidle, Cassilly, Eckardt, Feldman, Guzzone, Hester, Salling, ~~and Gallion~~ Gallion, Carozza, Carter, Lee, Ready, Smith, Sydnor, Waldstreicher, West, and Young**

Read and Examined by Proofreaders:

Proofreader.

Proofreader.

Sealed with the Great Seal and presented to the Governor, for his approval this _____ day of _____ at _____ o'clock, _____ M.

President.

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Courts – Court Dog and Child Witness Program – Established**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing the Court Dog and Child Witness Program; providing that
4 the Program shall be in the circuit court of each county that participates in the
5 Program; providing that participation in the Program is voluntary; requiring a
6 participating court to adhere to certain procedures ~~and rules~~ adopted by the
7 Administrative Office of the Courts; establishing the purpose of the Program;
8 requiring the Administrative Office of the Courts to develop a plan to implement the
9 Program; requiring the Administrative Office of the Courts to establish requirements
10 that a party in a certain proceeding must follow; requiring the Administrative Office
11 of the Courts to make information about the Program publicly available; requiring
12 the Administrative Office of the Courts to adopt certain ~~rules~~ procedures; defining

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.

Italics indicate opposite chamber/conference committee amendments.



1 certain terms; altering the termination date of the Court Dog and Child Witness Pilot
2 Program; and generally relating to the Court Dog and Child Witness Program.

3 BY adding to

4 Article – Courts and Judicial Proceedings

5 Section 9–501 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 5. Court Dog and Child Witness
6 Program”

7 Annotated Code of Maryland

8 (2013 Replacement Volume and 2019 Supplement)

9 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

10 Chapter 467 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 2016, as amended by Chapter
11 196 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 2017 and Chapter 466 of the Acts
12 of the General Assembly of 2019

13 Section 2

14 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,

15 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

16 **Article – Courts and Judicial Proceedings**

17 **SUBTITLE 5. COURT DOG AND CHILD WITNESS PROGRAM.**

18 **9–501.**

19 (A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS
20 INDICATED.

21 (2) “CHILD WITNESS” MEANS A WITNESS WHO IS A MINOR WHEN THE
22 WITNESS TESTIFIES IN A COURT PROCEEDING.

23 (3) “FACILITY DOG” MEANS A DOG THAT HAS:

24 (I) GRADUATED FROM A PROGRAM OF AN ASSISTANCE DOG
25 ORGANIZATION THAT ~~TRAINS DOGS FOR THE PURPOSE OF REDUCING STRESS IN A~~
26 ~~CHILD WITNESS OR CHILD VICTIM;~~

27 (II) ~~RECEIVED 2 YEARS OF TRAINING;~~

28 (III) ~~PASSED THE SAME A PUBLIC ACCESS TEST AS A FOR~~
29 ~~SERVICE DOG DOGS; AND~~

30 (IV) IS A MEMBER OF A NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED ASSISTANCE
31 DOG ASSOCIATION; AND

1 (II) COURT PROTOCOL AND POLICIES, INCLUDING THE
2 EXPECTED ROLE OF AN ANIMAL ASSISTANCE TEAM AND HOW NOT TO INTERFERE
3 WITH EVIDENCE COLLECTION OR THE EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

4 (B) (1) THERE IS A COURT DOG AND CHILD WITNESS PROGRAM.

5 (2) THE PROGRAM SHALL BE IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF EACH
6 COUNTY THAT PARTICIPATES IN THE PROGRAM.

7 (3) PARTICIPATION IN THE PROGRAM SHALL BE VOLUNTARY.

8 (4) A PARTICIPATING COURT SHALL ADHERE TO THE PROCEDURES
9 ~~ESTABLISHED AND RULES~~ ADOPTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SECTION BY THE
10 ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS.

11 (C) THE PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM IS TO PROVIDE A FACILITY DOG OR
12 THERAPY DOG TO A CHILD WITNESS IN ANY CIRCUIT COURT PROCEEDING OR OTHER
13 RELATED COURT PROCESS, MEETING, OR INTERVIEW IN THE STATE, INCLUDING:

14 (1) AN IN CAMERA REVIEW OR OTHER INTERACTION WITH A JUDGE
15 OR A MAGISTRATE;

16 (2) A MEETING WITH AN ATTORNEY, BEST INTEREST ATTORNEY,
17 PRIVILEGE ATTORNEY, OR OTHER SPECIALIZED ATTORNEY; OR

18 (3) A MEETING WITH A CUSTODY EVALUATOR.

19 (D) TO ACCOMPLISH THE PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM, THE
20 ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS SHALL:

21 (1) DEVELOP A PLAN TO IMPLEMENT THE PROGRAM;

22 (2) ESTABLISH THE PROCEDURES THAT A PARTY IN A COURT
23 PROCEEDING MUST FOLLOW TO REQUEST THAT A THERAPY DOG AND THERAPY DOG
24 HANDLER OR FACILITY DOG AND FACILITY DOG HANDLER ASSIST A CHILD WITNESS;
25 AND

26 (3) ENSURE THAT THE DETAILS OF THE PROGRAM ARE PUBLICLY
27 AVAILABLE.

28 (E) THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS MAY ADOPT ~~RULES~~
29 PROCEDURES TO IMPLEMENT THIS SECTION.

1 **Chapter 467 of the Acts of 2016, as amended by Chapter 196 of the Acts of 2017**
2 **and Chapter 466 of the Acts of 2019**

3 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
4 October 1, 2016. It shall remain effective for a period of [5] 4 years and, at the end of
5 September 30, [2021] 2020, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this
6 Act shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.

7 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
8 October 1, 2020.

Approved:

Governor.

President of the Senate.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.