

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

Senator Bobby A. Zirkin, Chairman
Senator Delores G. Kelley, Vice Chairman
2 East Miller Senate Building

Witness Guidelines

- Public Hearings:

The Committee typically schedules bill hearings on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays during the legislative session. Bill hearings usually begin at 1:00 pm. Please monitor the General Assembly Hearing Schedule for scheduled hearings.

The Chairman will announce a tentative bill order at the beginning of each hearing. The order is subject to availability of sponsors, the number of bills and the number of witnesses signed up to testify.

In general, the Committee does not hold public hearings on House Bills that have been cross-filed in the Senate.

All bill hearings are streamed live over the internet and may be accessed through the Maryland General Assembly's website.

- Testimony:

The Committee accepts both written and oral testimony.

Written: Please provide **sixteen (16) copies** of written testimony to Committee staff by **12:00 PM** the day of the bill hearing. The bill's number, the name of the individual or organization submitting the testimony, and the individual or organization's position (Support, Support with Amendments, or Opposed) should be clearly marked on the first page of testimony. Please **do not** submit testimony with plastic covers, binders or other materials that cannot be easily filed or recycled. **Electronic testimony – facsimile or email – is not accepted.**

Oral: Electronic witness sign-up screens are located in the lobby outside the Committee Room. **Sign-up is available between 8:30 AM and 12:15 PM the day of the bill hearing and must be done in person.** Oral testimony is generally limited to three minutes per person. The Chairman may further limit oral testimony based on the number of witnesses signed up to testify on the day of the hearing. If oral testimony is further limited, the Chairman will make an announcement prior to the start of the days bill hearings.

If you plan to stream an audio visual presentation during your oral testimony, please alert the Assistant to the Chair prior to the scheduled hearing. All audio visual presentations must be loaded on the Committee computer prior to the scheduled hearing. Additionally, **audio visual presentations and oral testimony is limited to three minutes per person/presentation.**

In general, when the Committee schedules a House Bill for a public hearing, the Committee will accept oral testimony from the bill's **sponsor only**. However, if there is any opposition to the bill, the Committee will accept oral testimony from one panel of proponents and one panel of opponents. Witnesses are asked to organize themselves into a panel of four (4) when they sign up to testify.

- Bill Files

The Committee retains bill files of all bills assigned to the Committee during each legislative session. Bill files include a copy of the bill, fiscal and policy note, amendments, written testimony, a listing of witnesses who signed-up to testify, committee recorded votes, and the floor report (if voted out of Committee). Bill files are available to be viewed or copied by the public after the bill is heard, but a bill file may not be taken from the Committee. Bill files from previous sessions may be found in the Department of Legislative Services Library. The Library is located in the basement of the Legislative Services Building at 90 State Circle in Annapolis. The Library can be reached at 410.946.5400.

Library Hours:

Interim: Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Session: Monday: 8:00 a.m. until the adjournment of the regular 8:00 p.m. floor session, or until 10:00 p.m. whichever comes first. Tuesday through Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Please note, all bill files from the most recent session will be transferred to the Library no later than July 1st of that year.