

COMMISSION ON CHILD CUSTODY DECISION-MAKING

SUMMARY

Western Maryland - PUBLIC HEARING #1

October 10, 2013, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Location: Allegany College of Maryland, Cumberland Campus
12401 Willowbrook Road, Cumberland, Maryland 21502

Commissioners in Attendance:

Honorable Cynthia Callahan, Chair
Renee Bronfein Ades, Esq.
Honorable Shannon E. Avery
Delegate Kathleen M. Dumais
Dr. Carlton E. Munson
Kathleen A. Nardella, Esq., LCSW-C
Keith N. Schiszik, Esq.

Department of Family Administration Staff:

Gerald Loiacono
Joseph Warren
Adam Wheeler

Interpreters:

Lawrence Haller, Spanish Interpreter
Mandy Hawk, ASL Interpreter

Public Attendance:

<u>Testify</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>
yes	Gannon, Chris	n/a
yes	Schaaf, Greg	presented
yes	Smith, Sr., David W.	The Children's Rights Fund of Maryland
yes	Washington, David	Fair-4-Justice

Chair commenced the hearing at 6:15 p.m.

Testimony commenced at 6:20 p.m.

Witnesses in alphabetical order:

Chris Gannon - Father/Concerned Citizen

- States that he was wrongfully accused of substance abuse during custody case.
- Believes that custody cases can be damaging to families both emotionally and financially.
- Provided materials for the Commission.

Greg Schaaf – Family Law Attorney, Allegany County

- Believes that courts should have a mechanism for scheduling emergency cases.
- States that Maryland custody law should be updated to reflect modern families.

David Smith - “Fathers for Access” Group, Prince George’s County

- Told commission that he will expand at later meetings.

David Washington – Fair-4-Justice, Prince George’s County

- Believes that there should be expanded rights for shared parenting.
- Promised to speak at later commission meetings.
- Submitted a journal for commission to review.

Hearing concluded at 7:45 p.m.