

HCS HB 2148 -- TERMINATION OF CHILD SUPPORT OBLIGATIONS

SPONSOR: Dinkins

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Emerging Issues by a vote of 13 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Legislative Oversight by a vote of 9 to 0.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 2148.

Currently, a parent's obligation to pay child support terminates when the child reaches 18 years of age unless the child is enrolled in and attending a secondary school program of instruction and other specified criteria are met, in which case the support obligation terminates when the child reaches 21 years of age. Beginning with court orders issued on or after January 1, 2025, this bill specifies that a parent's obligation to pay child support terminates when a child reaches 18 years of age or receives a high school diploma or certificate of graduation, which ever occurs later, unless the child is physically or mentally incapacitated from supporting himself or herself and insolvent and unmarried.

The bill additionally provides that for orders issued on or after January 1, 2025, if child support is awarded, there must be a rebuttable presumption in cases in which joint physical custody has been awarded where the child or children spend equal or substantially equal time with both parents that the calculation of child support begins with a 50% credit for overnight visitation or custody adjustment below the basic amount of child support authorized.

This bill is similar to HB 73 (2023) and HB 1557 (2018).

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced version of the bill.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this legislation provides much needed updates to child support law. The age of 18 is recognized as the threshold of adulthood. It follows that we should recognize these individuals as financially independent. Ending child support at the current age of 21 can delay development of responsibility in young adults. Ending child support at age 18 provides a clear and fair endpoint to the financial responsibility of the individual's parents and ensures these young adults begin to care for themselves.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Dinkins; Jeff Miller, Americans For Equal Shared Parenting & The Lead Lobbyists; and The L.E.A.D. Lobbyists (Learn.Educate.Advocate.Duplicate); and Arnie C. Dienoff.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony and witnesses testifying online can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.