

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – Courts and Judicial Proceedings
Section 3-804(a)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(1995 Replacement Volume and 1995 Supplement)

BY adding to
Article – Courts and Judicial Proceedings
Section 3-826.1
Annotated Code of Maryland
(1995 Replacement Volume and 1995 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – Family Law
Section 1-201(a) and (c)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(1991 Replacement Volume and 1995 Supplement)

BY repealing
Article – Family Law
Section 1-201(d)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(1991 Replacement Volume and 1995 Supplement)

Preamble

~~WHEREAS, Maryland has over 10,000 children in temporary out of home placements under the custody of local departments of social services and the average length of stay is approaching three years; and~~

~~WHEREAS, In light of the continued lengthy delays in the adoption process, late in 1995, Governor Glendening created the Governor's Commission on Adoption; and~~

~~WHEREAS, The Commission was charged with making recommendations for changes in laws, policies, and practices that would expedite the adoption and permanency planning processes; and~~

~~WHEREAS, The overriding principles that emerged from the Commission's deliberations are that the best interests of the child should always prevail in the judicial, legal, and administrative arenas and that the child's need for a permanent and nurturing family should at least be equal to the rights of the parents; and~~

~~WHEREAS, Maryland must use every available resource to reduce the foster care caseload and move children waiting for adoption to stable, nurturing, permanent homes; and~~