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Written Testimony

House Bill 1313 - Family Investment Administration – Temporary Cash Assistance – Eligibility

Appropriations Committee

March 3, 2020

SUPPORT

Background: House Bill 1313 eliminates full-family sanctions in the Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) program and establishes 75% of the TCA grant as the child's portion that cannot be sanctioned and allows 30% of the remaining adult portion to be sanctioned for TCA work participation sanctions. A TCA sanction is a suspension of a TCA grant when an adult does not meet certain participation requirements. Sanctions are quite frequent and can be imposed in error or inconsistently for minor violations. Maryland imposes immediate full-family sanctions, meaning families lose their entire benefit -for up to 30 days- when an adult is sanctioned which can have devastating effects on the whole family.

Written Comments: The Baltimore Jewish Council represents The Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore and all of its agencies, including Jewish Community Services (JCS), which provides social services to low-income Marylanders. Maryland has one of the highest rates of Deep Poverty in the country, with almost 50% of those living in poverty, living in deep poverty. It is these individuals and families who receive public benefits such as TCA. Full- family TCA sanctions hit these families the hardest, losing their ability to buy basic family needs, rent, etc.. For these reasons we support ending full-family sanctions for TCA recipients and we ask for a favorable report on HB1313.

The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of The Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.

BALTIMORE JEWISH COUNCIL

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