



## TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB 152

### Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act of 2020

House Appropriations Committee

February 27, 2020

Submitted by Stacey Jefferson and Margo Quinlan, Co-Chairs

#### Member Agencies:

Advocates for Children and Youth  
Baltimore Jewish Council  
Behavioral Health System Baltimore  
CASH Campaign of Maryland  
Catholic Charities  
Episcopal Diocese of Maryland  
Family League of Baltimore  
Fuel Fund of Maryland  
Health Care for the Homeless  
Homeless Persons  
Representation Project  
Job Opportunities Task Force  
League of Women Voters of Maryland  
Loyola University Maryland  
Maryland Catholic Conference  
Maryland Center on Economic Policy  
Maryland Community Action  
Partnership  
Maryland Family Network  
Maryland Hunger Solutions  
Paul's Place  
Public Justice Center  
St. Vincent de Paul of Baltimore  
Welfare Advocates

#### Marylanders Against Poverty

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**Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) strongly urges the committee to reject the language in the BRFA, HB 152, that reduces Medicaid provider rates that were promised in the minimum wage bill last year, as well as language realigning funding for the Community Health Resources Commission.**

**MAP opposes language in the BRFA which would reduce Medicaid provider rates.** (Page 16 lines 9 and 18, page 17 line 11). The Heroin and Opioid Prevention Effort (HOPE) and Treatment Act of 2017 and the subsequent minimum wage legislation of 2019 provide multi-year reimbursement rate increases for behavioral health services and other Medicaid providers. However, the Governor's FY 2021 budget reduces that reimbursement rate to two percent, which falls far short of the required four percent increase for FY 2021. As healthcare costs have risen over the years and the demand for these vital services has increased, provider rates have lagged behind, threatening the ability for providers to keep their doors open. MAP strongly urges the committee to restore the FY 2021 reimbursement rate increases for Medicaid providers - community behavioral health services, developmental disability services, and senior services – in the critical effort to maintain and increase access to life-saving treatment and supportive services in Maryland.

**MAP opposes language in the BRFA which threatens funding for the Community Health Resources Commission (CHRC).** (Page 17 lines 30-32; page 18 lines 1-8; page 19 lines 13-32; page 20 lines 1-14). Since the passage of the Affordable Care Act, the health care landscape in Maryland has dramatically changed. Although over 90% of Marylanders have health insurance coverage, there are still gaps in access to health care throughout the state. Through their grant process, the CHRC is able to fund projects that seek to close those gaps to meet the needs of marginalized populations. CHRC grantees have demonstrated an ability to leverage their grant funds to provide essential services for Marylanders in need of health services that are not covered by insurance. Reorganizing and reducing the funding for the CHRC will also reduce leveraged dollars, which ultimately eliminates the ability of community providers to fill gaps in the health care system.

**MAP appreciates your consideration and urges the committee to fully fund Medicaid provider rates, and fund the Community Health Resources Commission using the current formula in statute.**

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*Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) is a coalition of service providers, faith communities, and advocacy organizations advancing statewide public policies and programs necessary to alleviate the burdens faced by Marylanders living in or near poverty, and to address the underlying systemic causes of poverty.*