



**Local power, collective voice
for Maryland's children, youth and families**

February 12, 2020

**SB 490 Human Services - Youth Services Bureaus
Letter of Information**

Dear Chairmain Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Senate Budget & Taxation Committee,

The Maryland Association of Local Management Boards is comprised of 24 local organizations, the core purpose of which is to improve outcomes for Maryland's children, youth and families. Every Local Management Board (LMB) provides a unique set of outcomes-focused programs to meet the needs of the communities they serve. We work to end hunger, support early childhood initiatives, divert juveniles from the criminal justice system and keep children in school.

On behalf of the Maryland Association of Local Management Boards, we offer information and a few questions about the proposed legislation. If passed, it would repeal a requirement that the Department of Human Services identify eligible youth services bureaus and estimate the amount of State funds to allocate to each youth services bureau; require State matching funds for a youth services bureau to be paid directly to its private sponsor; require the Governor to include at least \$1,800,000 in the annual budget bill for youth services bureaus and provide for the allocation of the required funds.

With limited resources, every dollar counts. Through local decision-making Local Management Boards are implementing effective solutions that bring revenue to our communities, create jobs, ease budget pressures and ensure that vital services for our citizens are provided with positive results. These cost-effective approaches improve the lives of our local children and families. As this occurs our communities become stronger. Such high stakes require us to adhere to high standards in program performance, outcomes and efficient utilization of monetary resources because we are working to help the people who live close to us. There is a need for increased funding for children and family programs in all of our communities. It is imperative that any funding put forth for this purpose be a priority of the community it will be serving, has local buy-in, is effective and is smartly expended.

Specifically, we seek more information around the following issues:

- **How will children be better off if this action were passed?** Local Management Boards are sticklers for results and ultimately making sure that any strategy implemented makes children and families better off because of the service provided. Detailed performance measurement is



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necessary in every program. Does this bill require any measurement of Youth Service Bureaus' performance?

- **What added value will this action bring to Maryland?** Several Local Management Board Directors in the association note that the Youth Service Bureaus are doing a good job in their community. Will this legislation provide any additional value? In other words what will the passing of this bill create beyond what is already happening without it?
- **Was local input sought in the formation of this legislation?** Local Management Boards were established by law to assess community needs and gaps in services then work with the local community to create services and programs that fill those needs. We are fearful that this bill ignores the input of the consumers it aims to serve.
- **Will this bill cut funding for other necessary services in local jurisdictions?** The association has grave concerns that the result of this bill may ultimately move money away from other programs that are equally or more necessary in local jurisdictions.
- **Is this bill fair for other providers of children and family services?** Will this action create an unfair advantage? The State and local jurisdictions have policies to prevent unfair competition for government resources. It is a concern that funding for a particular vendor will establish an unfair disadvantage for other equally competent providers of service.

Thank you for your shared commitment to protecting Maryland's most vulnerable children. If the result of this bill is moving money out of the Children's Cabinet fund, it will create negative consequences in local communities. Those consequences could include reduced services for Children and undermine the hard work, commitment and passion of local leaders, parents, students and many others.

The Maryland Association of Local Management Boards encourages local power through a collective voice that result in stronger, healthier and happier children and families across Maryland. It is within that vision that we consider the pros and cons of this bill. We ask you to consider funding needs across all sources when it comes to caring for the children and families in our communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pamela M. Brown".

Pamela M. Brown, Ph.D.
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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael R. Clark".

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