



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony of Senator Jill P. Carter  
In Favor of SB0918 - Human Services – Trauma–Informed Care –  
Commission and Training  
Before the Judicial Proceedings Committee  
on March 6, 2020**

**Mr. Chairman, Vice chair, and Members of the Committee:**

**According to a 2017 analysis of national data, more than 40 percent of children in Maryland have experienced a traumatic event. Such events range from the death or incarceration of a parent, or a drug addiction or mental health problem of a family member. These experiences can undermine children's long-term health and well-being; they also can increase a child's risk for smoking, alcoholism, and other unhealthy behaviors, and for experiencing depression, and various chronic diseases.**

**Senate Bill 918 attempts to help mitigate the effects of these experiences by transforming the State of Maryland into a more trauma-responsive state. The bill does this by establishing the Commission on Trauma-Informed Care - a task force charged with coordinating a statewide initiative to prioritize the trauma-responsive and trauma-informed delivery of State services that impact children, youth, and families.**


**Per the bill, the Commission, in collaboration with the Maryland Department of Health, will identify goals, data, and metrics to aid in the development of a statewide strategy. The bill will also require those state agencies that engage children and families to be trained in identifying childhood trauma and responding to that trauma**

appropriately and effectively, and to submit annual reports to the Commission.

This approach has proven successful in states that have adopted this trauma-awareness model, such as Delaware and Tennessee. Maryland should be added to the list. Studies show that effectively treated trauma can help change a child's trajectory in life for the better, which is something we should want for all of Maryland's children.

For these reasons, I urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 918 from this committee.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jill P. Carter". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Jill P. Carter**