

DATE: February 13, 2020

BILL NUMBER: HB 672 **COMMITTEE:** Judiciary

BILL TITLE: Children in Need of Assistance - Qualified Residential Treatment Program

DHS POSITION: Support

Good afternoon Chairman Clippinger, Vice Chair , and Members of the Committee.

I am Michelle L. Farr, Executive Director of Social Services Administration, within the Maryland Department of Human Services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 672 (HB627). HB 627 corrects a technical error that was codified in statute, with the passage of Senate Bill 1043 (SB1043) during the 2019 session.

The Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) of 2018 was enacted by Congress and signed by the President into federal law on February 9, 2018. The Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018 is a landmark legislation changing how the federal government funds child welfare with Title IV-E funding. Under FFPSA, funding now provides an incentive to keep children with their families and out of home foster care. When foster care is a viable option it allows federal reimbursement for care in family-based settings and certain residential treatment programs for children with emotional and behavioral disorders requiring special treatment.

During the 2019 legislation session, SB 1043, which contained the definition for Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) was passed. In defining the treatment program in SB 1043, the current statute places the federal definition of the act below a provision concerning continuing services following discharge. This was a technical error. To correct this, the licensing and accreditation definition currently in (5) (ii) and (iii) needed to be moved in the statutes hierarchy. In addition, the modification clarifies the requirements to be considered a QRTP and aligns Maryland's definition with the federal definition of a QRTP.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 672. The Department respectfully requests a favorable report.