



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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TO: Delegate Anne R. Kaiser, Chair
Delegate Alonzo T. Washington, Vice Chair
Ways and Means Committee Members

FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus (MLLC)

RE: HB912 Maryland Child Tax Credit

The MLLC supports HB912 Maryland Child Tax Credit.

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation which improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a voice in the development of public policy affecting the Latino community and the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB912.

The 2017 federal tax reform changed the Child Tax Credit program that as a result excludes many low-income families from receiving a tax credit for their qualified dependents. Taxpayers whose children are non-U.S. citizens were also excluded from the program. Many of these low-income families reside in rural areas, are people of color, and are single-parent households. Children under 6 years old are disproportionately excluded from the tax credit, as well. The families that are in greater need of assistance are shut out from full benefits, obstructing our state's children a way out of poverty.

In 2018, almost half of Marylanders living in poverty experienced deep poverty, meaning their income was below 50% of the federal poverty line. Additionally, 13.5% of Latinos and 12.4% of children in Maryland lived below the poverty line. Children growing up in poverty are susceptible to lifelong disadvantages, such as poor physical and mental health, lower educational attainment, and a greater likelihood to develop risky behaviors that can lead to criminal activity. The legislature has the valuable opportunity to help end child poverty throughout the state.

HB912 creates a state Child Tax Credit to benefit families that are left out from the federal program. A taxpayer with one or more dependent children that are under the age of 5, or up to the age of 16 with a physical, intellectual, developmental, or emotional disability, including children who are non-U.S. citizens, would qualify for a tax credit. We are advocating for our disadvantaged children to prevent the perpetuation of poverty in their communities. These children must not be left behind.

The MLLC supports this bill and urges a favorable report on HB912.