



**Montgomery County Community Action Board Testimony in Support of SB160  
Human Services - Temporary Cash Assistance - Calculation of Benefits  
February 2, 2023**

TO: The Honorable Melony Griffith, Chair; The Honorable Katherine Klausmeier, Vice Chair; and Members of the Finance Committee

FROM: Dr. Jeffery Johnson, Chair, Montgomery County Community Action Board

The Montgomery County Community Action Board, the County's federally designated anti-poverty group, supports SB160 and asks the Committee for a favorable report. This bill would exclude housing subsidies in the calculation of Temporary Cash Assistance, providing additional support to low-income Marylanders.

As longtime advocates for the Self-Sufficiency Standard, which measures the income required to meet basic needs at a minimally adequate level, our board supports this bill as an opportunity to help more residents meet their basic needs. Here in Montgomery County where the cost of living is so high, any additional financial support for lower-income residents can make a big difference. The Montgomery County Self-Sufficiency Standard for a single adult with one infant and one school-age child is \$116,864, which is over four and a half times the federal poverty level.<sup>1</sup> By comparison, the maximum TCA benefit for this same family is just \$624 per month, a fraction of the \$9,739 monthly Self-Sufficiency Standard. Policy changes that would increase eligibility for this modest subsidy would be a welcome change.

We strongly encourage the Committee to support SB160 and to explore other opportunities to expand access to critical financial supports for our neighbors who are struggling the most.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://maryland-cap.org/the-maryland-2023-self-sufficiency-standard-calculator/>