



Honorable Members of the Maryland Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

My name is Bridget Blount, and I am honored to represent Baltimore's Promise, where I serve as the Deputy Chief Executive Officer. Baltimore's Promise, the only StriveTogether Network member organization in Maryland, is a cradle to career collective impact organization dedicated to addressing inequitable outcomes for youth and families in the city of Baltimore. Today, I stand before you in unwavering support of Governor Wes Moore's ENOUGH Act, recognizing its potential to enact transformative change in our communities.

As an organization deeply committed to co-designing innovative solutions in partnership with youth and families, we firmly believe in using data to inform our efforts. The ENOUGH Act aligns with this commitment by emphasizing the importance of data driven strategies to address the root causes of inequity. By harnessing the power of data, including the lived experiences of our residents, we can identify and prioritize interventions that will have the most significant impact on improving outcomes for our youth and families.

Moreover, we commend the ENOUGH Act for its recognition that those closest to the issues are often best positioned to design effective solutions. Our organization has witnessed the power of community-led initiatives and understands that sustainable change requires the active involvement and leadership of the individuals who intimately understand the challenges faced by our communities. The ENOUGH Act's emphasis on community-driven solutions ensures that the voices of those directly impacted by inequities are not only heard but actively shape the policies that will affect their lives.

Investing in place-based strategies is a cornerstone of the ENOUGH Act, and we wholeheartedly endorse this approach. Place-based strategies acknowledge the unique challenges faced by different neighborhoods and communities within our city. By tailoring interventions to the specific needs of each area, we can foster localized solutions that address the root causes of inequity, leading to more comprehensive and sustainable improvements in city-wide outcomes.

The key components of the ENOUGH Act resonate with our organization, partners and community stakeholders for a variety of reasons:

Increase Community Health and Safety: The safety and well-being of our communities are paramount. By investing in community-based initiatives that address the root causes of violence and trauma, we can create safer neighborhoods where residents can thrive.

Provide "Cradle to Career" Access to High-Quality Education and Care: Education is the cornerstone of opportunity. By ensuring that all children have access to high-quality early childhood education and comprehensive support services all the way through to post-secondary



success, we can level the playing field and set our young people on the path to economic mobility from an early age.

Connect Residents to Quality Jobs and In-Demand Occupations: Economic opportunity is essential for building thriving communities. By investing in workforce development programs and initiatives that connect residents to quality jobs in growing industries, we can create pathways to prosperity for all Baltimoreans. We have seen this work with Grads2Careers, where young people in Baltimore are now earning \$10k more per year than when we launched this strategy.

Enable Family-Sustaining Income and Access to Affordable High-Quality Housing, Child Care, and Health Care: Families deserve access to the resources and support they need to thrive. By ensuring access to affordable housing, child care, and comprehensive health care services, including reproductive, maternal, behavioral, and mental health care, we can promote family stability and economic security.

Provide High-Quality Support for Children with Disabilities, Child Welfare, and Justice-Involved Youth and Young Adults: Every child deserves the opportunity to reach their full potential, regardless of their circumstances or system failures. By investing in high-quality support services for children with disabilities, child welfare, and justice-involved youth and young adults, we can ensure that all young people have the support they need to succeed.

In conclusion, I urge the Maryland House Appropriations Committee to wholeheartedly support Governor Wes Moore's ENOUGH Act. This legislation is a beacon of hope for our communities, offering a strategic, data-driven, and community-centered approach to dismantling systemic inequities. By investing in evidence-based solutions, empowering community voices, and embracing place-based strategies, we can collectively work towards a more just and equitable future for all Marylanders.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and dedication to building a brighter tomorrow. Together we can break the cycles of intergenerational poverty and create more inclusive and resilient communities where all residents have the opportunity to thrive.

Sincerely,

Bridget Blount

Bridget Blount
Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Baltimore's Promise