



MARYLAND

SB482

Education, Energy and the Environment Committee
Chair Brian Feldman

Favorable

Share Our Strength
Ayesha B. Holmes, Director

**Governor's Office for Children - Engaging Neighborhoods, Organizations, Unions,
Governments, and Households (ENOUGH) Grant Program (ENOUGH Act of 2024)**

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to share testimony related to the establishment of the "Governor's Office for Children and the Enough Grant Program", known as the Enough Act of 2024. Share Our Strength (SOS), which operates No Kid Hungry-Maryland (NKH), is an organization that works on behalf of Marylanders to end childhood hunger and alleviate poverty. Share Our Strength believes strongly in the establishment of an entity such as the Governor's Office for Children (GOC) to manage and oversee the work of a Children's Cabinet, that includes representatives from each of the Child Serving Agencies.

We strongly believe that such a coordinating body can have positive outcomes for children and families and offer long-term poverty-ending solutions for Maryland families. Many federal initiatives that are currently not available will become open to Maryland, once the Children's Cabinet is reformed and activated.

The ENOUGH ACT of 2024 also will provide grant funding to local communities to spur action in the form of community driven strategies that are thoughtfully created to meet the needs of children, youth and families. These grants can strategically invest in communities that have long been forgotten and lift up opportunities for young people to thrive.

Finally, we hope that the ENOUGH ACT of 2024 will reinvigorate the Local Management Boards which, when appropriately supported and resourced, can provide valuable cross agency support to children with intensive needs through the Local Care Team. They can also be local ambassadors for the GOC at the local level. In areas of early childhood, youth achievement, and intensive needs, including physical, intellectual, and emotional disabilities.

As you move forward, we encourage a favorable report on the re-establishment of this important office to support cross-agency collaboration, strategic community investments, and improved outcomes for every child.

I can be reached at aholmes@Strength.org, and via phone at 410.971.7873, if you should have any questions.

Sincerely,
Ayesha B. Holmes
Director