

Friday, March 6, 2026

Dear Members of the House Appropriations Committee,

I am a resident of Baltimore City and District 41. I am also a child clinical psychologist specializing in internalizing disorders, including the treatment of trauma-induced mental illness. I am submitting testimony as a member of Sanctuary Maryland. I am testifying in **support of HB628: Human Services - Universal Basic Income for Transition-Age Youth Program - Establishment.**

HB628 would establish the Universal Basic Income for Transition-Age Youth Program in the Department of Human Services. This program would provide crucial economic security for young people who are aging out of the out-of-home placement program. This bill also includes requirements that the Department report annually to the General Assembly on outcome measures of recipients, ensuring oversight of this program and clarification that the UBI is accomplishing its intended purpose.

For many young people in foster care and out-of-home placement programs, aging out of these programs is an overwhelming, frightening, lonely, and extremely vulnerable phase of life. After already experiencing the disruption and trauma of being removed from their families of origin, these young people deserve comprehensive supports to ensure they are able to start their adulthood on solid ground. Guaranteeing that their basic financial needs will be met will increase their chances to launch into their adult lives successfully and protect them against negative and dangerous outcomes like becoming unhoused or going hungry. As a clinical psychologist, the urgent necessity of a UBI program for this vulnerable population is exceedingly clear.

It is for these reasons that I am encouraging you to **support HB628: Human Services - Universal Basic Income for Transition-Age Youth Program - Establishment.**

Thank you for your time, service, and consideration.

Sincerely,
Dr. Katherine Blaha
Baltimore, MD 21209