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March 10th, 2026

Honorable Chairman Barnes and Esteemed Members of the Committee:

On behalf of **CASA of Cecil County**, we respectfully submit testimony in support of **House Bill 628**.

HB 628 establishes the Universal Basic Income for Transition-Age Youth Program within the Maryland Department of Human Services to provide direct financial support to young adults aging out of out-of-home placements. The bill recognizes the unique challenges faced by youth leaving foster care and seeks to provide economic stability during a critical transition to independence.

CASA volunteers work closely with children and youth in the child welfare system and often remain involved as young people approach adulthood. We see firsthand how the transition out of foster care can be abrupt and overwhelming. Many youth aging out of care lack stable housing, family support, and financial resources. Providing direct financial assistance can help prevent homelessness, improve educational and employment outcomes, and give young people the stability needed to build successful, independent lives.

Supporting youth during this transition is essential to breaking cycles of instability and ensuring that young people leaving care have the opportunity to thrive. HB 628 represents an important investment in some of Maryland's most vulnerable young adults.

For these reasons, **CASA of Cecil County urges a favorable report on HB 628.**

Respectfully submitted,
Grant Handley
CASA of Cecil County



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