

TO: Members, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

RE: Support – Senate Bill 668 - Children's Cabinet Fund - Renaming and Funding for Grants to Local Management Boards

DATE: 2-24-26

POSITION: FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Guzzone and Committee Members,

The Family Tree strongly supports Senate Bill 668, which renames the Children's Cabinet Fund to the Children's Cabinet Interagency Fund and codifies increased state appropriations dedicated to grants for local management boards (LMBs). This bill is a meaningful investment in community-based systems of care that align with our mission to strengthen families, prevent crisis, and connect children and parents to needed supports.

The Family Tree is a Baltimore City-based nonprofit that provides family strengthening services, early childhood support, parent education, and community partnerships that empower children and caregivers to thrive. Our work regularly intersects with local management boards, which play a central role in coordinating cross-sector services and filling gaps in supports for at-risk families.

Sustained and predictable funding for community needs is critical, SB 668 requires the Governor to include dedicated appropriations for the Children's Cabinet Interagency Fund for grant awards to LMBs across multiple fiscal years. This funding model:

- Enhances stability and predictability for local providers.
- Enables strategic planning for program expansion and evaluation.
- Reduces disruptions in services that families rely upon.

Local management boards bring together government, nonprofits, educators, health providers, and families to align services across sectors. This integrative approach:

- Promotes early intervention, reducing the need for costly crisis-oriented services.
- Improves access to family support, behavioral health, and youth development programs.
- Elevates community voice in decision-making.

By prioritizing LMB grants, the State signals a commitment to equity-focused, evidence-based strategies that reflect local needs — whether in urban centers like Baltimore City or rural jurisdictions. SB 668's funding framework lays the groundwork for data-driven improvements and better long-term outcomes for children and families.

The Family Tree urges the Committee to give Senate Bill 668 a favorable report. This legislation strengthens the infrastructure that supports coordinated, locally driven services for children and families across Maryland. Investing in the Children's Cabinet Interagency Fund and the capacity of



local management boards prioritizes prevention, community health, and family stability — outcomes that are foundational to thriving communities.

For these reasons, **The Family Tree urges a favorable report on SB668.** Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

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