

February 24, 2026



Senator Guy Guzzone
Chair, Senate Budget & Taxation Committee
3 West Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Support for Senate Bill 668 - Funding for Local Management Boards

Good afternoon, Chair Guzzone and Members of the Committee, thank you for allowing my testimony today in support of Senate Bill 668 to increase funding for the Children’s Cabinet Interagency Fund.

My name is Ian Wright-Williams and I am a senior athlete at Oakland Mills High School and student intern in Howard County and today, I’d like to share how CCIF funding has impacted my life and my community.

1. Leadership & Youth Voice

- One of the issues I care about most is making sure young people have a real seat at the table. Through my leadership opportunity with the Howard County Local Management Board, I have been able to help develop the HoCo Youth Council to uplift youth voices in the planning of local priorities. Too often, decisions are made about young people without young people being present. Being part of this work has allowed me to advocate for students across the county and ensure that our experiences shape policies and programs. I have also benefited from participating in various trainings focused on equity and access to mental health. These trainings expanded my understanding of the barriers many youth face and strengthened my ability to advocate for inclusive solutions. Additionally, projects like graphic design for t-shirts, coding initiatives, and community focus groups have allowed me to apply creative and technical skills in meaningful ways.

2. Workforce Development

- Workforce development is another issue I am passionate about because economic opportunity directly impacts stability, education, and long-term success. Through the department’s paid internship program, I have gained hands-on experience that prepares me for a meaningful career. I’ve developed skills in communication, collaboration, project planning, and professional accountability.

3. Mentorship & Long-Term Support

- Mentorship is essential to youth success, and I have seen both the impact and the gaps that still exist. I’ve had the opportunity to review applications for youth mentorship programs and That reality showed me how great the need is—and how important it is to expand these opportunities. Through staff and board members, I have gained

access to mentorship that goes beyond advice. I've built professional relationships and connections that will last a lifetime. These relationships have helped me grow personally and professionally, and they have shown me what it looks like to lead with purpose.

Local Management Boards serve as the state's local collaboration hubs—neutral conveners that bring together **education, health, housing, workforce, behavioral health, juvenile services, and community-based organizations** to address complex challenges facing families. Thank you for your leadership and consideration. We welcome the opportunity to discuss this request further and to continue partnering with your Administration to build a stronger, more equitable Maryland.

Sincerely,



Ian Wright-Williams
Youth Intern
Howard County Local Children's Board