



## Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

February 24, 2026

Senate Bill 668 – *Children's Cabinet Fund – Renaming and Funding for Grants to Local Management Boards*

### **POSITION: SUPPORT**

The Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MDAAP) is a statewide association representing more than 1,100 pediatricians and allied pediatric and adolescent healthcare practitioners in the State and is a strong and established advocate promoting the health and safety of all the children we serve. On behalf of MDAAP, we submit this letter of **support** for Senate Bill 668. Senate Bill 668 proposes to rename the Children's Cabinet Fund as the Children's Cabinet Interagency Fund, requiring dedicated state appropriations for local grants, and establish clear funding expectations for fiscal years 2028-2031.

Renaming the fund appropriately reflects its expanded purpose of improving coordination across state agencies that serve children and families. Pediatricians see firsthand how children's health outcomes are shaped not only by medical care, but also by education, behavioral health services, child welfare systems, housing stability, nutrition, and family support.

Fragmented systems lead to delays in care, duplication of services, and preventable harm. A clearly defined interagency fund underscores the State's commitment to breaking down silos and advancing a coordinated, child-centered approach to policy and service delivery. Effective cross-agency collaboration improves early identification of developmental delays, strengthens behavioral health access, enhances school readiness, and reduces long-term healthcare costs.

This legislation ensures that, beginning in designated future fiscal years, the Governor must include a dedicated appropriation to the renamed fund in the annual state budget. These funds will support grants to Local Management Boards (LMBs), which play a vital role in coordinating services for children, youth, and families at the community level. Pediatricians routinely partner with local systems of care, including schools, behavioral health providers, social services agencies, and youth programs, that rely on LMB coordination.

The bill's phased and increasing funding targets provide essential stability and accountability. By setting clear appropriation expectations for fiscal years 2028-2031 and specifying that these grants are in addition to, not a replacement of existing LMB funding, the legislation protects current services while enabling meaningful expansion. This legislation strengthens interagency collaboration, ensures dedicated and growing state investment in local coordination, and reinforces the infrastructure that supports children and families. We respectfully urge a favorable vote.

#### **For more information call:**

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