

BENJAMIN BROOKS
Legislative District 10
Baltimore County

Education, Energy, and the
Environment Committee
Energy Subcommittee

Chair, Joint Electric Universal
Service Program Workgroup



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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 402
Residential Child Care Programs – Education of Children and
Training of Child and Youth Care Practitioners

Education, Energy and the Environment Committee
March 4, 2026

Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of Senate Bill 402, Residential Child Care Programs – Education of Children and Training of Child and Youth Care Practitioners.

Children living in foster care are at high risk of dropping out of high school and are substantially less likely to attend or graduate from college than their peers. SB 402 responds to this shortcoming by ensuring that children in residential childcare programs receive comprehensive educational support and that Residential Child and Youth Care Practitioners (RCYCP) are fully trained to deliver the highest-quality care and outcomes.

The bill establishes reasonable requirements for educational support that benefit students, including regularly scheduled study time, assistance with coursework, support that aligns with a 504 Plan or Individualized Education Program (IEP), and encouragement to participate in extracurricular activities. SB 402 also enumerates a list of important topics that must be completed in RCYCP training programs, ensuring that staff possess the necessary tools to support all children with diverse lived experiences and needs.

As Maryland strives to provide a world-class education to all of our state's students, the General Assembly must not overlook one of the most vulnerable groups among them: children living in residential care homes. SB 402 takes practical, targeted steps to support these students by strengthening educational services within residential programs and ensuring youth practitioners are properly trained to help each child reach their full potential.

For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on SB 402.

With kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Benjamin T. Brooks".

Benjamin Brooks