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Appropriations Committee

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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
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House Bill 709 – Human Services – Youth Service Bureaus – Funding

- Youth Services Bureaus (YSBs) were established in the 1970's as a Statewide network of delinquency prevention services. YSBs are an integral resource in their communities and provide effective, research based interventions to address serious issues facing families today, things like depression, anxiety, violence, substance use, bullying, and suicide.
- Youth Service Bureaus are established within COAMR under the Department of Juvenile Services and receive oversight from this agency. The bill will not change this.
- HB 709 codifies what the General Assembly has done through budget language for many years, designating funding within the Children's Interagency Fund for Youth Service Bureau programming. We did this year after year to ensure that these programs, which are a State-local government funding partnership, would be maintained. In recent years approximately 99% of youth served at YSBs were not adjudicated (found guilty of committing a delinquent act) within two years after ending treatment. In recent years, the Governor chose not to spend money we earmarked for YSBs so now we need to pursue statutory assurances that the money will be available.
- HB 709 pegs the amount of total funding to the level provided for Youth Service Bureaus from FY 2011 through FY 2017. It also provides a minimum funding amount for each Youth Service Bureau and makes available money for expansion into new jurisdictions. It is important to note that for every

dollar the state invests in Youth Service Bureaus, another eight dollars is leveraged in local government dollars and other public and private grants.

- HB 709 will allow the funding to go directly to the local government that provides the matching dollars. This does not prevent a local jurisdiction from involving their Local Management Board, but it does mean this is not required.
- I received the thoughtful questions raised in the information letter submitted from the local management boards. I have attached to my testimony responses to each question and my panel will be happy to address any of them in detail.
- Maryland is currently not doing enough to ensure kids have access to desperately needed mental health services. There are numerous bills introduced this session that seek to provide solutions for needed access for preventative services for juveniles. This bill is one of those that will help maintain existing YSB services and allow for needed expansion.