

NANCY J. KING  
Legislative District 39  
Montgomery County

MAJORITY LEADER



James Senate Office Building  
11 Bladen Street, Room 121  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
301-858-3686 • 410-841-3686  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3686  
Fax 301-858-3670 • 410-841-3670  
Nancy.King@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**SPONSOR STATEMENT**

**Senate Bill 637 – Children – Therapeutic Nursery Program - Funding**

February 19, 2020

Mister Chairman and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee:

Therapeutic Nursery Programs are licensed, integrated mental health and education programs for families with high-risk children from birth to five. These children show significant delays in social and emotional development. Many have experienced trauma in their life and many have been removed from typical mainstream preschool/daycares due to safety concerns or behavioral issues.

There are several Therapeutic Nursery Programs in the State. They include:

- The Arc of Maryland
- Kennedy Krieger Institute
- Kennedy Krieger PACT – Helping Children with Special Needs
- The Lourie Center for Children’s Social and Emotional Wellness

Therapeutic Nursery Programs partner with parents/caregivers to effectively support the development of the child and the family as a whole. Therapeutic Nursery Centers can also offer specialized child care, for example, services for children who are experiencing homelessness or housing uncertainty.

Therapeutic Nursery Programs have an over 80% success rate of transitioning children to a typical kindergarten and maintaining typical education placement and social-emotional gains through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. This success rate results in millions of dollars of savings to the state and counties by reducing long-term intensive special education expenditures.

Maryland State Department of Education has funded these programs at different levels using both state and federal funds. Fiscal 2020 saw a significant cut in funding to these programs. Senate Bill 637 will codify the Therapeutic Nursery Program and establish a per pupil funding formula for the program.

Interventions at younger ages have a huge potential to alter a child’s future developmental trajectory. The benefits from these early learning programs are substantial and need to be protected and so I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 637.