



**Local power, collective voice
for Maryland's children, youth and families**

February 5, 2020

SB 207 – SUPPORT

Dear Chairman Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee,

The Maryland Association of Local Management Boards is comprised of 24 local organizations, the core purpose of which is to improve outcomes for Maryland's children, youth and families. Every Local Management Board (LMB) provides a unique set of outcomes-focused programs to meet the needs of the communities they serve. We work to end hunger, support early childhood initiatives, divert juveniles from the criminal justice system and keep children in school.

On behalf of the Maryland Association of Local Management Boards, I urge you to support SB 207. This legislation addresses the issue of consent for unaccompanied homeless youth who are also parents. Unfortunately, this population has many barriers to face including risk of sex trafficking, youth single parenting, co-occurring behavioral health issues, hunger and a host of other concerns. The ability to consent to services and supports and treatment, for themselves and their families, helps to speed up connection to services and improves access to care.

Unaccompanied homeless youth are a growing at-risk population in our state. This proposed legislation will increase their access to very necessary services and supports. We thank Senator Washington for introducing the bill and urge the committee's support.

Sincerely

Pamela M. Brown, Ph.D.
Chair, Maryland Association of Local Management Boards