Testimony Concerning HB 711:
"Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center –
Inclusion of Out-of-Home Placement Data"
Submitted to the House Ways & Means Committee
February 19, 2020

Position: Support

Maryland Family Network (MFN) supports HB 711, which would add placement data from State-sponsored out-of-home care to the data collected, analyzed, and reported on by the Maryland Longitudinal Data System (MLDS) Center. Adding this data will help the State better evaluate the experiences and outcomes of children provided with out-of-home placements. Ultimately, we hope it will help address some of the challenges and barriers to success that these children often face in school and in life.

MFN has worked since 1945 to improve the quality of life for Maryland children and their families. We are committed to a process that identifies and addresses factors affecting the well-being of children and youth. Efforts by the State that encourage a more coordinated and more effective approach to the delivery of services to children are in keeping with our mission.

HB 711 specifically adds the Social Services Administration within the Department of Human Resources to the list of organizations that provides information to the MLDS Center. This information will assist the MLDS Center in including State-sponsored out-of-state home care to the placement data section. As further stated in the legislation, the goal of this change is to generate timely and accurate information about children in state-sponsored out-of-home care that can be used to improve the State's education and child welfare systems and guide decision-making.

In the past, this placement information has not been taken fully into account when evaluating student and workforce data. MFN believes HB 711 will help improve school and life outcomes for these children, and we urge your favorable consideration.

Early Head Start

MARYLAND CHILDCARE RESOURCE NETWORK