



January 20, 2020

The Honorable Maggie McIntosh
Chair, House Appropriations Committee
131 House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support for HB258

Dear Chair McIntosh and Committee Members:

The Citizens Review Board for Children would like to offer its support of House Bill 258. The Citizens Review Board for Children consists of Governor appointed volunteers representing 23 counties and Baltimore City. CRBC reviews cases of children in out-of-home placement, monitors child welfare programs and makes recommendations for system improvements to the Department of Human Services and the Maryland Legislature.

This bill requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to provide the Department of Human Services (DHS) with disaggregated data on educational outcomes for youth in foster care. This would allow for an inter-agency collaborative response to any disparities or areas needed to improve outcomes for children and youth involved with child welfare. The Department of Human Services currently provides monthly and annual child welfare reports. However, having additional disaggregated data from other state agencies such as MSDE would make DHS reporting more comprehensive and identify areas needing collaboration for improving outcomes and ensuring that children and youth in the State's care achieve to their fullest potential.

Access to information and educational outcomes education is critical to ensure that child welfare advocates, stakeholders and the public are aware of the experiences and outcomes for children involved with the child welfare system.

The Citizens Review Board for Children conducted a total of over 2200 individual case reviews of children and youth in foster care during Fiscal Years 2019 and 2020. Having disaggregated data would help identify problems that children and youth in foster care face and be useful for advocating for targeted interventions that would improve child and youth health, education, placement stability and overall well being.

On behalf of the Citizens Review Board for Children I urge a favorable report on HB258.

Sincerely,
Nettie Anderson-Burrs, Chair
CRBC State Board

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