



## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 133

### State Finance and Procurement – Appropriation Reductions – (Board of Public Works Budget Reduction Clarification Act)

*House Appropriations Committee*

January 20, 2021

*Submitted by Stacey Jefferson and Julia Gross, Co-Chairs*

### **Member Agencies:**

Advocates for Children and Youth  
Baltimore Jewish Council  
Behavioral Health System Baltimore  
CASH Campaign of Maryland  
Catholic Charities  
Episcopal Diocese of Maryland  
Family League of Baltimore  
Fuel Fund of Maryland  
Health Care for the Homeless  
Homeless Persons  
Representation Project  
Job Opportunities Task Force  
League of Women Voters of Maryland  
Loyola University Maryland  
Maryland Catholic Conference  
Maryland Center on Economic Policy  
Maryland Community Action  
Partnership  
Maryland Family Network  
Maryland Hunger Solutions  
Paul's Place  
Public Justice Center  
St. Vincent de Paul of Baltimore  
Welfare Advocates

### **Marylanders Against Poverty**

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**Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) supports House Bill 133** because it will help the Board of Public Works (BPW) make better-informed decisions about funding for essential state services. In order for Maryland's leaders to make the best possible decisions, they need to understand how those actions will affect Marylanders' lives.

Under existing state law, the BPW is only required to provide very minimal public notice before voting on reductions of up to 25 percent in already approved state fund. If the Board was to propose cuts that would take away much needed supports from people already struggling to make ends meet, MAP and its members would want the opportunity to explain to BPW members how those cuts would affect Maryland families.

Without adequate public notice, it is challenging for organizations like MAP to even evaluate the impacts of cuts the BPW is considering. A 10-day notification period provides a reasonable amount of time for individuals and organizations to review proposed cuts to services and understand how they will affect people living in poverty.

Passing HB 133 would benefit everyone by providing BPW members more information about the effects of budget cuts prior to voting, allowing state leaders to avoid unintended negative consequences for the hard-working Maryland families whose economic security may depend on budget decisions.

Further, the bill also makes some important clarifications that maintain the reasonable limits on the BPW's ability to make budget reductions. Ensuring that the Board can only cut up to 25 percent from one line item for an entire fiscal year protects public services from being eliminated completely without adequate legislative review.

**MAP appreciates your consideration and urges a favorable report of HB 133.**

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***Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) is a coalition of service providers, faith communities, and advocacy organizations advancing statewide public policies and programs necessary to alleviate the burdens faced by Marylanders living in or near poverty, and to address the underlying systemic causes of poverty.***