

HB284 and SB0299

Full Support

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Baltimore is the best city in the entire state of Maryland. This statement goes against the grain of what most media outlets and outsiders would say about us, but that is because they are unable to see beyond the manifestations of daily trauma that are experienced in and across the city. The opiate crisis, housing inequities, food deserts, lack of internet access, reduction in various city services and loss of life due to gun violence are just a few of the traumas that Baltimoreans grapple with on a daily basis.

As you are aware, a school shooting was the catalyst for a group of 3 high school students testifying at Baltimore City Council where they called on the city leadership to do something to help them effectively cope with the trauma that they had been suffering with, oftentimes in silence. These students each experienced various Adverse Childhood Experiences and statistically were not expected to be able to survive their immediate social conditions, yet they did. They used their voices to advocate for trauma informed legislation, the first of its kind in the nation. Their voices were heard and the Elijah Cummings Healing City Act was signed in Baltimore City Law in February 2020.

Our state has been ravaged by the socioeconomic and health disparities related to COVID. In this past year, we have all been confronted with the glaring reality that not only do we need trauma informed legislation at the local level, our State too, must be trauma informed. Trauma is no respecter of person, it does not care the race, gender or social status of the individual. Yet, the responses to the trauma have a history of racial imbalance. The disenfranchised are often retraumatized by the services that are supposed to help them with no solution in sight.

Passing this legislation at the state level will not eradicate trauma over night, but it will take a deliberate stance in favor of statewide healing from trauma. Baltimore Mayor Brandon Scott and his administration will undergo trauma informed training before any other city agency, this speaks volumes. I look forward to Governor Hogan and all other Maryland elected officials following suit. I am in full support of and hopeful for the passage of HB284 and SB0299.