THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

BILL:	**House Bill 931 – Child Care Providers – Notice of Allegations of Child Abuse or Neglect (Aiden's Law)**
SPONSOR:	**Delegate Arikan**
HEARING DATE:	**February 18, 2021**
COMMITTEE:	**Judiciary**
CONTACT:	**Intergovernmental Affairs Office, 301-780-8411**

POSITION:	**SUPPORT**

The Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS House Bill 931**, which requires the designee of the State Superintendent of Schools, to require family care providers or child care centers to provide notification within a specific timeframe to parents and guardians; when there is a report of an incident of suspected child abuse or neglect. The Bill also ensures the family childcare provider or childcare center specifies the contents of the notices and prohibits a person from providing the notice under certain circumstances, establishing specific penalties as it pertains to childcare providers and reports of suspected child abuse or neglect.

In Prince George's County, agencies work closely with childcare providers, including Prince George's County Public Schools, to thoroughly investigate suspected allegations of abuse or neglect. Coordination and collaboration include parents, providers, and the government and increase the opportunity for a strong safety net for our youngest residents. We stand by the belief that every adult is responsible for ensuring children are safe in their environments. When something happens, it should be immediately communicated to parents and caregivers. Parents have the right to be notified in a timely manner when allegations regarding suspected abuse or neglect are reported in programs their children attend. However, they should be cautioned that an allegation does not equal a finding of abuse or neglect, so the appropriate language used in notifications is vital to not unduly implicate people who may be innocent of the allegations.

For the reasons stated above, the Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS House Bill 931** and asks for a **FAVORABLE report**.