



January 14, 2021

Maryland Child Tax Credit: HB 143 — SUPPORT

To: Chair Kaiser, Vice Chair Washington, and members of the Ways and Means Committee

The Parents' Place of MD (PPMD), as Maryland's Special Education and Health Information Center, whose mission is to empower families as advocates and partners in improving education and health outcomes for children with disabilities and special healthcare needs with a commitment to diversity and equity, supports HB 143 and SB 218.

PPMD serves over 4,300 families who have children with disabilities and special healthcare needs who share with us every day the financial struggle of raising their children. Parents tell us how they have difficulty paying for therapies, medication, equipment, and often must forgo these necessities to provide for the basics – food and shelter. Many families also report that they often cannot change jobs due to their child's disability and special healthcare needs. Many parents also reduce their hours to care for their children. Compound those difficult decisions with now not being eligible for the federal tax credit, further reducing family income and further hurting their ability to succeed.

This was all before COVID! Now, unemployment rates are at an all-time high and are further exacerbating the fiscal stress for families who were already behind the eight-ball pre-pandemic. Research has well documented that children born in poverty are at higher risks for being born with or acquiring disabilities and special healthcare needs, which in turn creates additional financial strain on the family.

If passed, this tax credit would be one piece of the pie to help support families and improve outcomes for their children. This legislation would allow parents to begin to breathe, raise expectations, and better meet their financial needs, ultimately translating into successes for children. That is why The Parents' Place of MD urges a **favorable report** on this bill.