



**HEALTH CARE FOR THE HOMELESS TESTIMONY  
IN SUPPORT OF**

**HB 1041 – Department of Human Services - Family Investment Program - Contract  
and Program Review**

**House Appropriations Committee  
March 10, 2022**

Health Care for the Homeless supports HB 1041, which requires the Department of Human Services to hire an outside consultant to conduct a thorough review of the Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) Program to ensure the program is employing best practices that will achieve meaningful outcomes for family economic stability. In particular, the bill requires that any non-governmental entities that the government contracts with for work activity requirements have performance-based incentives for 1) education and training, 2) job placement and placement wage, 3) employment retention, and 4) exiting TCA due to earnings that are at least 150% of the state's minimum wage. The bill also has a focus on providing accommodations to people with disabilities and people experiencing homelessness.

Reviewing the TCA program, as HB 1041 intends, also helps dismantle historically racist policies. The federal TANF program – particularly the strict work requirement - is rooted in a history of racism that perpetuates false and harmful assumptions about families living in poverty.<sup>1</sup> Far too often, TCA recipients are placed into temporary, unpaid work experience activities with little to no opportunity for employment after they have completed their placement. Recipients who are forced into these unpaid work experience placements have the most difficulty securing employment after TCA, and overall make the lowest earnings post-TCA.<sup>2</sup>

If Maryland is going to reduce the number of households living in deep poverty and increase employment, the TCA contracts must be improved. HB 1041 improves education, employment outcomes, and wages. This bill is a critical measure in improving the lives of people living in the deepest of poverty. As such, we urge a favorable report on HB 1041.

*Health Care for the Homeless is Maryland's leading provider of integrated health services and supportive housing for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. We work to prevent and end homelessness for vulnerable individuals and families by providing quality, integrated health care and promoting access to affordable housing and sustainable incomes through direct service, advocacy, and community engagement. We deliver integrated medical care, mental health services, state-certified addiction treatment, dental care, social services, and housing support services for over 10,000 Marylanders annually at sites in Baltimore City and Baltimore County. For more information, visit [www.hchmd.org](http://www.hchmd.org).*

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<sup>1</sup> [Life After Welfare Series - University of Maryland, Baltimore \(umaryland.edu\)](http://www.umaryland.edu)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ssw.umaryland.edu/media/ssw/fwrtg/welfare-research/work-supports-and-initiatives/workactivities.pdf?&>