

Date: January 31, 2023

Bill number: HB 108

Committee: House Appropriations Committee

Bill title: **Human Services - Basic Income for Transition Age Youth - Establishment**

DHS Position: **LETTER OF INFORMATION**

The Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS) thanks the Committee for the opportunity to provide a Letter of Information for House Bill 108.

DHS supports in theory the concept of Universal Basic Income (UBI) for youth that have turned 18 years old while living in care as of October 1, 2022. Research demonstrates national trends of housing, employment, mental and physical health and academic achievement for adolescents that have been in out-of-home care. One study reports that nationally more than 20,000 youth exited care without reuniting with parents or a permanent family home. DHS concurs that young people transitioning from care are likely to benefit from a monthly stipend. DHS would like to identify the following items for consideration prior to establishing a Universal Basic Income:

- Research on UBI's impact on federal support, such as Social Security Income (SSI), needs to be determined as there is concern that UBI may possibly impact SSI eligibility.
- Research pilot UBI programs in California and New York. While neither of these states have established a statutory infrastructure, the pilots can provide initial lessons learned. Public-private partnerships may be a possible strategy for consideration based on early findings.
- Research supports offered to youth in care such as the Foster Youth Savings Program, Educational Training Vouchers, Semi-Independent Living Arrangements, etc. to determine how to leverage current resources and ways to build upon them in order to meet the entire needs of each individuals' transition into adulthood.
- Youth that have been in DHS custody have options to access benefits from the Department through their 21st birthday upon leaving care and so the possibility of changing the age for access of UBI from 18 to 21 may be an additional strategy to consider.

DHS welcomes an opportunity to work with all members of the General Assembly on a variety of strategies to support our children and adolescents in care, especially around skill and resource development that promote their independence into adulthood.

The Department is grateful to offer this letter of information for HB 108 and welcomes the opportunity to discuss further.

