



"Being here for Maryland's Children, Youth, and Families"

**Testimony submitted to Senate Budget and Tax Committee
Support**

February 22, 2023

Senate Bill 833 – Prince George's County Violence Interrupter Support Program Fund

The Maryland Association of Youth Service Bureaus, which represents a network of Bureaus throughout the State of Maryland, Supports Senate Bill 833 - Prince George's County Violence Interrupter Support Program Fund. Youth Service Bureaus provide prevention, intervention and treatment services and understand the importance of community based programs in addressing violence in our communities.

This bill will establish a fund to provide violence interrupter programs to reduce incidents of violence in Prince George's County. In 2021 there were over 130 homicides in Prince George's County, the highest number since 2007, and the County has also experienced a rise in crimes such as car jackings. This bill takes a holistic approach to address the many factors that can lead to incidents of violence. Community programs will provide services and resources to county residents such as food, housing, health care, employment workforce development, educational enrichment, mental and behavioral health services, financial literacy, and violence intervention programs.

According to the CDC, two-thirds of adults experienced at least one Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) and many people experienced more than one such event. ACEs include all types of abuse and neglect as well as parental mental illness, substance use, divorce, incarceration, and domestic violence. Research has shown that children exposed to multiple ACEs are in a constant state of stress and may struggle with following rules and authority, leading to disruptive behaviors including violence. The holistic approach proposed in this bill will help to address some of these factors as well as teaching youth and adults ways to resolve conflict without violence.

We respectfully ask you to support this bill.

Respectfully Submitted:

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