



**Testimony in SUPPORT of HB547**

Family Prosperity Act of 2023

Ways and Means Committee

February 15, 2023

Dear Honorable Chair Atterbeary and Members of the Committee,

CASA is pleased to offer favorable testimony in strong support of House Bill 547, the Family Prosperity Act of 2023. This critical legislation plays a key role in strengthening the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the Child Tax Credit (CTC) - both of which CASA members are deeply impacted by.

With over 122,000 Black and Latino immigrant members, CASA is the foremost immigrant organization in the mid-Atlantic region and a national leader in advocacy for immigrant rights. Now a national immigrant powerhouse, CASA creates change with its model blending human services, community organizing, and advocacy in order to serve the full spectrum of needs, dreams, and aspirations of members.

As a member of the Tax Credits for Maryland Families (TCMF) coalition, CASA is committed to educating policymakers and the public about the state's working family tax credits - and ensuring that every eligible individual benefits from these poverty-reducing credits. In 2021, CASA was proud to lead efforts to expand the Earned Income Tax Credit to ITIN filers, following the lead of immigrant taxpayers - many of which file taxes with CASA at one of our IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites that provide free tax services for low-income families.

Because of the language access available and various services offered at CASA's Welcome Center, our offices are seeing firsthand the drastic impact that the expansion of the EITC to ITIN filers, in particular, has on families. From extra gas money for a parent to get their child to school, to everyday groceries, to keeping the lights on at home - the ways in which the EITC has reduced poverty and lifted painful burdens on immigrant families has been transformative.

This bill, in addition to permanently expanding the EITC to ITIN holders, takes powerful steps to provide relief to families, including the matching of 45% of the federal EITC for low-income families, creating a state CTC, extending eligibility for children, and more.

**CASA respectfully requests that the committee offer a favorable report on HB547.**