



**Local power, collective voice
for Maryland's children, youth and families**

February 1, 2023

**SUPPORT – HB243 - Baltimore City Young Readers Program - Expansion and Alterations
(Young Readers Program Expansion Act of 2023)**

Dear Representatives:

On behalf of the Maryland Association of Local Management Boards, I am writing in support of HB243. Local Management Boards in each county and jurisdiction in the State of Maryland conduct needs assessments of their communities. As a result, we know there are young children across the state of Maryland who require extra supports to help with early literacy to better prepare them for kindergarten and ensure they are reading on grade level by 3rd grade, which is a leading indicator of High School graduation. Expanding the Baltimore City Young Readers Program to a statewide program has great potential for increasing the number of Maryland children birth to five who enter school ready to learn while increasing their likelihood of successful school completion.

The Baltimore City Young Readers Program mails free, high-quality books to children from birth to five, regardless of family income in Baltimore City. This program promotes better attitudes towards reading in children and increased reading skill practice, and ultimately, promotes kindergarten literacy readiness. Expanding this program to all young children in Maryland will promote kindergarten readiness and school success in all counties in Maryland.

We urge you to support HB243 to help increase the number of children entering school ready to learn through improved early literacy for all of Maryland's young children.

Sincerely,

Pamela M. Brown, PhD
Legislative Chair



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