



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

HB 694 – Governor's Office for Children - Engaging Neighborhoods, Organizations, Unions, Governments, and Households (ENOUGH) Grant Program (ENOUGH Act of 2024)

DATE: February 28, 2024
COMMITTEE: House Appropriations Committee
POSITION: Favorable
FROM: The Office of Frederick County Executive Jessica Fitzwater

As the County Executive of Frederick County, I urge the committee to give HB 694 – Governor's Office for Children - Engaging Neighborhoods, Organizations, Unions, Governments, and Households (ENOUGH) Grant Program (ENOUGH Act of 2024) a favorable report.

This bill will establish the Governor's Office for Children and provide a pathway to addressing child poverty at the local level using place-based strategies.

Currently, the State of Maryland has a profound need for an office with the purpose of pulling our children out of poverty in a meaningful and effective way. This bill will provide local nonprofits, school systems, and other agencies like Local Management Boards with grants to work towards solving this problem. State, local, and private partnership are crucial to large-scale issues such as child poverty. By providing a pathway to deal with this crisis, the State is showing a commitment to ensuring all children and families have the ability to enjoy a higher quality of life.

HB 694 is vital to strengthening State and local partnerships to help our most vulnerable populations. By providing \$15 million dollars to local organizations and governments in areas where child poverty is high, the State is being proactive in preventing children from falling further into poverty and lifting those who are currently experiencing poverty out. This bill will assist Frederick County by providing grant funding for three of Frederick County's FY24-26 Community Plan priorities, Families are Economically Stable, Communities are Safe for Children, Youth, and Families, and Children Enter School Ready to Learn. This bill also has the potential to provide funding for our Local Care Team which focuses on connecting families who have children and youth with disabilities and/or severe behavioral health challenges to resources and services to keep them safe and healthy within the community. Finally, this bill will assist with the potential solutions created from the recommendations within our Child Care Market Study that is currently underway. HB 694 is crucial to addressing childhood poverty within Frederick County and the State of Maryland.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 694. I urge you to advance this bill with a favorable report.

Frederick County: Rich History, Bright Future

[NAME]

RE:

February 20, 2024

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Jessica Fitzwater, County Executive
Frederick County, MD