

CITY OF BALTIMORE

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Councilwoman Phylicia R. L. Porter

District 10

MEMBER:

Public Safety and Government Operations
Education, Workforce, and Youth
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February 26, 2024

The Health and Government Operations Committee
Room 241
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Testimony Supporting HB0694 The ENOUGH Act 2024

Re: Support for HB0694 The ENOUGH Act 2024 from Members of the Baltimore City Council

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk and Honorable Members of the Committee,

Today we write in strong support of the Governor's Office of Children- Engaging Neighborhoods, Organizations, Unions, Governments, and Households (ENOUGH) Grant Program (ENOUGH Act 2024). The ENOUGH Act 2024, a crucial piece of legislation is vital to the social, economic, and infrastructural improvement of communities across the city of Baltimore and the state of Maryland. As dedicated public servants who believe in the power of legislative action, we thank the Moore–Miller administration for introducing this monumental act and for forging a meaningful path to better invest in communities characterized by the weight of historic concentrated poverty.

For generations, individuals and families across Baltimore City have had to reimagine what it means to simply survive. More specifically, those living in underserved communities have been burdened with food insufficiencies, a lack of access to quality healthcare, and sparse economic opportunity. These systemic barriers have hindered their ability to access essential resources and have often left populations isolated and vulnerable. The ENOUGH Act stands to use political will, cultural competency, and \$15 million in state level funding to change this trajectory. By focusing on the root causes of concentrated poverty and building hyper-focused improvement plans, this initiative is a step in the right direction if we plan to improve the basic quality of life for so many Marylanders.

The 73rd Baltimore City Council has intentionally prioritized children, families, and our most vulnerable populations which remains at the center of our work. Collaboratively, we have passed legislation to address the consequences of redlining and chronic disinvestment while maintaining our duty to be fiscally responsible. From policies like the Inclusionary Housing tax credit to holding the executive leadership of our city agencies accountable, this Council has played a critical role in addressing the issues that are prevalent across the City of Baltimore.

The passage and future implementation of HB0694 provides us with the opportunity to take on these issues with more innovative approaches which Baltimoreans will reap the benefits of good government.

The ENOUGH Act is designed to build an infrastructure for implementation and to tackle complex disparities head-on. We believe that this bill is carefully crafted in a way that it not only brings in new resources to jurisdictions that have historically experienced underinvestment. But it will also position coalitions of active community leaders, historic residents, and key stakeholders as the decision makers driving this change. By leaning into this invaluable expertise and perspective, the work done through the ENOUGH Act will make a meaningful impact on the lives of countless individuals in some of our most unseen and underestimated communities.

The Baltimore City Council urges the favorable passage of this historic legislation and is ready to walk alongside our colleagues and neighbors to redefine what is possible in our communities.

Below, members of the Baltimore City Council are supportive of the ENOUGH Act and look forward to working with the Moore- Miller administration to ensure a better quality of life for generations to come from this historic legislation.

In Partnership,



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Nick J. Mosby, President, Baltimore City Council



Zeke Cohen Councilman, Baltimore City Council District 1



Mark Conway Chairman, Baltimore City District 4



Sharon Green Middleton Vice President, Baltimore City Council District 6



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Kristerfer Burnett Councilman, Baltimore City District 8



John T. Bullock Chairman, Baltimore City District 9



Councilman Antonio Glover – District 13



Odette Ramos Councilwoman, Baltimore City District 14