



February 28, 2024

House Bill 694

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

House Appropriations Committee

Position: FAVORABLE

Anne Arundel County **SUPPORTS** House Bill 694 – Governor's Office for Children - Engaging Neighborhoods, Organizations, Unions, Governments, and Households (ENOUGH) Grant Program (ENOUGH Act of 2024).

For decades, historically marginalized communities have dealt with the hardship of poverty, which has led to devastating outcomes including underfunded schools, limited economic opportunity, and high crime rates. Due to lack of investment and resources, these negative outcomes permeate generation after generation. This is a critical time where we have the opportunity to make real change in the lives of families who work tirelessly to provide the best future for their children, and we cannot miss the moment.

Anne Arundel County supports Governor Moore's initiative to tackle generational poverty in Maryland as a necessary and top priority, and we believe that House Bill 694 is a bold step forward in these efforts. Provisions in this legislation include establishing the Governor's Office for Children, creating the ENOUGH Grant Program, and requiring \$15 million in the FY25 budget and \$15 million mandated in FY26. The program will serve communities where 20 percent or more children live in poverty, partner with community-based organizations that work directly with low-income families, and assist in funding strategic plans that are being implemented to address poverty in different jurisdictions. Places like Brooklyn Park, which has the highest rates of poverty, crime, and substance abuse in Anne Arundel County, would be able to receive funding for a new community center with the purpose of providing financial support, mental health services, and workforce development training, among many other socioeconomic needs.

Poverty hits every community differently, but we can tackle this challenge if we come together as lawmakers and enact policies that value the marginalized, lift up the underserved, and revitalize forgotten communities. We need an all-hands-on-deck approach, and we believe the Moore Administration is moving Maryland in the right direction. For all of these reasons, I respectfully request a **FAVORABLE** report on House Bill 694.



Steuart Pittman
County Executive