

Sen McCray_ Testimony SB 97.pdf

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CORY V. MCCRAY
Legislative District 45
Baltimore City

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Budget and Taxation Committee

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Vice Chair, Capital Budget

Executive Nominations Committee

Legislative Policy Committee

Joint Committee on Gaming Oversight



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Vote Yes On Senate Bill 97

Bill Title: Youth Enhancement Program - Establishment

Committee: Budget and Taxation, Education, Energy, and the Environment

Hearing Date: January 15, 2025

Dear Chair Guzzone and Members of the Committee,

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I write to you in support of Senate Bill 97, a pivotal piece of legislation that seeks to establish the *Youth Enhancement Program* within the Maryland State Department of Education. This program is designed to address the longstanding educational and social inequities faced by youth in urban jurisdictions, providing targeted support for individuals from historically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Senate Bill 97 proposes granting funding to nonprofit organizations that deliver essential services to early adolescent children and young adults—many of whom qualify for free or reduced-price meals. These young people face significant barriers to success, including economic hardship, limited mentorship, and a lack of educational resources. This legislation directly addresses those challenges by funding programs that focus on health and wellness, mental health, character development, and college and career readiness.

The holistic approach of this program is critical. By supporting initiatives in athletics, nutrition, and emotional well-being, Senate Bill 97 recognizes that academic achievement alone is insufficient. True success for these youth requires resilience, life skills, and emotional stability—qualities that can only be nurtured through continuous mentorship and comprehensive support. The inclusion of those who have previously benefited from these programs as mentors adds a powerful element of community-building and reinforces the cycle of empowerment.

Additionally, Senate Bill 97 ensures accountability through annual reports tracking student progress, allowing for continuous assessment and refinement of services. With a \$1 million annual appropriation starting in Fiscal Year 2027, this legislation secures sustained funding, ensuring that these vital services continue to have a meaningful, long-term impact.

In closing, Senate Bill 97 provides an invaluable opportunity to break cycles of disadvantage, creating a pathway for success for thousands of young Marylanders. I urge the Committee to lend its full support to this transformative initiative.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Cory V. McCray', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Cory V. McCray
45th District

MD4CS_MOST_MEC_SB92.pdf

Uploaded by: Ellie Mitchell

Position: FWA



**Senate Bill 92 – Education – Youth Enhancement- Establishment
Senate Budget and Taxation and Education, Energy, and Environmental Affairs
Committees**

Date: January 15, 2025

Position: Support with Amendment

The Maryland Out of School Time Network (MOST) is a statewide organization dedicated to closing opportunity gaps by expanding both the quantity and quality of afterschool and summer learning opportunities for school-aged young people. MOST serves as the backbone organization for the Maryland Coalition for Community Schools. The Maryland Coalition for Community Schools, founded in 2016, advocates for student and family success by leading the charge to expand the Community School Model in Maryland. The Maryland Education Coalition (MEC) advocates for adequate funding, equitable policies, and transparent accountability statewide for all students in Maryland's public schools.

On behalf of MOST, MEC and MD4CS, we are providing this testimony in support of Senate Bill 92. Maryland remains in the bottom ten states for access to out-of-school time programming. Unfortunately, state funding for programs like LEAP and PSOE has been reduced over the last decade. We are going in the wrong direction.

Research confirms that afterschool, summer, and mentoring programs help close achievement gaps, reduce risk-taking behaviors, increase graduation rates, and lead to higher-paying careers (Vandell, 2024). Investment in initiatives like the Youth Enhancement Program proposed in SB92 changes lives.

We support the suggested amendments from the EAC that ensure youth with disabilities are included and accommodated in programs funded through this initiative, including access to transportation where needed. We also hope that increased funding and expansion to additional counties will be considered as resources allow.

Ellie Mitchell

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EACtestimony.SB97.pdf

Uploaded by: Leslie Margolis

Position: FWA

Education Advocacy Coalition for Students with Disabilities

SENATE BUDGET AND TAXATION AND EDUCATION, ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEES

SENATE BILL 97 – EDUCATION –YOUTH ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM--ESTABLISHMENT

DATE: JANUARY 15, 2025

POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT

The Education Advocacy Coalition for Students with Disabilities (EAC), a coalition of nearly 50 organizations and individuals concerned with education policy for students with disabilities in Maryland, provides this testimony in support of Senate Bill 97 with amendments. Senate Bill 97 will establish a mentorship program that would provide grants to organizations that serve early adolescent children and young adults who attend public school in Baltimore City or Baltimore County, qualify for free or reduced price meals, and are members of a historically disadvantaged group who face obstacles to achievement. The EAC supports the establishment of this worthy program and suggests an amendment making clear that adolescents and young adults with disabilities must be included within the scope of the program.

Children and youth with disabilities historically have faced significant barriers to achievement; test scores consistently show a wide gap between the academic achievement of students with and without disabilities at every level—elementary, middle and high school. A disproportionate number of students and young adults with disabilities live in poverty. Further, young adults exiting the school system face barriers to employment. Mentorship is an essential component of the solution to these longstanding issues. It is important to note that a number of students with disabilities attend nonpublic special education schools at public expense because their local school system has determined that it is unable to meet the students' educational needs. These students, too, should be eligible for the program.

Therefore, the EAC proposes the following amendments:

Page 2, Lines 1-2: **"RESIDE IN OR ATTEND ANY PUBLIC SCHOOL IN BALTIMORE CITY OR BALTIMORE COUNTY OR RESIDE IN BALTIMORE CITY OR BALTIMORE COUNTY AND ATTEND A NONPUBLIC SPECIAL EDUCATION SCHOOL FUNDED BY THE BALTIMORE CITY OR BALTIMORE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM:"**

Page 2, lines 6- 7: **" ARE MEMBERS OF A HISTORICALLY DISADVANTAGED GROUP, INCLUDING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, WHO FACE OBSTACLES TO ACHIEVEMENT THAT MAY BE EFFECTIVELY MITIGATED BY LONG-TERM MENTORSHIP.**

Page 2, Section D: Add new subsection (3): **DELIVERED TO PARTICIPANTS IN ACCORD WITH THE REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS REQUIREMENTS OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT AND, IF APPLICABLE, SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973.**

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If enacted, Senate Bill 97 could make a significant difference in the lives of students and young adults with disabilities. For this reason, the EAC supports Senate Bill 97 with amendments.

For more information, please contact Leslie Seid Margolis, Co-Chairperson, at 443-692-2505 or at lesliem@disabilityrightsmd.org.

Respectfully submitted,

Selene A. Almazan, Selene Almazan Law, LLC

Rene Averitt-Sanzone, The Parents' Place of Maryland

Linda Barton, MSED, Education Consultant

Elizabeth Benevides, Autism Society of Maryland, Education Advocacy Coalition co-chair

Ellen A. Callegary, Attorney

Melanie Carlos, xMinds (Partnership for Extraordinary Minds)

Stephanie Carr, S.L. Carr Education Consultants, LLC

Rich Ceruolo, Parent

Michelle Davis, M.Ed., ABCs for Life Success

Jennifer Engel Fisher, Weinfeld Education Group

Lisa Frank and Andrea Bennett, The Special Kids Company

Marjorie Guldán and Rosemary Kitzinger, Bright Futures, LLC

Beth Ann Hancock, Charting the Course, LLC

Leilani Hardy, Maryland Coalition of Families

Morgan Durand Horvath, Abilities Network

Stacy Ganz Kahn, Educational Resources Group of Greater Washington

Kalman Hettleman, Independent Advocate

Ande Kolp, The Arc Maryland

Leslie Seid Margolis, Disability Rights Maryland, Education Advocacy Coalition co-chair

Mark B. Martin, Law Offices of Mark B. Martin, P.A.

Beth Nolan, Education Team Allies

Sumaiya Olatunde, H2D Counseling

Ellen O'Neill, Atlantic Seaboard Dyslexia Education Center

Ronza Othman, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland

Kate Raab and Nicole Joseph, Law Offices of Nicole Joseph

Rebecca Rienzi, Pathfinders for Autism

Jaime Seaton, BGS Law, LLC

Ronnetta Stanley, M.Ed., Loud Voices Together

Wayne Steedman, Steedman Law Group, LLC

Guy Stephens, Alliance Against Seclusion and Restraint

Maureen van Stone, Project HEAL at Kennedy Krieger Institute

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Jessica Williams, M.Ed., Education Due Process Solutions,
Liz Zogby, Maryland Down Syndrome Advocacy Coalition

UNF.amend.SB97.MDRTL.LauraBogley.pdf

Uploaded by: Laura Bogley

Position: UNF



REQUEST FOR AMENDMENT STATEMENT

SB97- Education - Youth Enhancement Program - Establishment
Laura Bogley, JD, Executive Director
Maryland Right to Life, Inc.

On behalf of our Board of Directors and members across the state, we respectfully seek amendment of SB97 – Education – Youth Enhancement Program – Establishment. While youth mentoring is a valuable program and worthwhile investment by the state, we object to any public funding for abortion, abortion providers or nonprofit organizations that promote abortion or the abortion industry – particularly among our schoolchildren in or coordinated by Maryland public schools.

Without an amendment to specifically exclude the program’s award of grants or Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) between the Maryland State Department of Education and nonprofit abortion organizations such as Planned Parenthood and Advocates for Youth, the bill will likely be used to increase the amount of taxpayer dollars used for abortion purposes. This bill in particular, due to the training and mentoring aspect of the program, could be used to further grow and develop the state’s abortion workforce at taxpayer expense.

No Public Funding for Abortion – Maryland is one of only 4 states that forces taxpayers to fund abortions. However, taxpayers generally disapprove of the use of taxpayer funding for abortion purposes. 53% percent of those surveyed in a January 2024 Marist poll say they oppose taxpayer funding of abortion.

Vast Majority Support Investment in Life - 86% of people polled favor laws that protect both the lives of women and unborn children. Public funds should not be diverted from but prioritized for health and family planning services which have the objective of saving the lives of both mothers and children, including programs for improving maternal health and birth and delivery outcomes, well baby care, parenting classes, foster care reform and affordable adoption programs.

Funding Restrictions are Constitutional - The Supreme Court of the United States, in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health* (2022), overturned *Roe v. Wade* (1973) and held that there is no right to abortion found in the Constitution of the United States. As early as 1980 the Supreme Court affirmed in *Harris v. McRae*, that *Roe* had created a limitation on government, not a government funding entitlement. The Court ruled that the government may distinguish between abortion and other procedures in funding decisions -- noting that “*no other procedure involves the purposeful termination of a potential life*”, and held that there is “*no limitation on the authority of a State to make a value judgment favoring childbirth over abortion, and to implement that judgment by the allocation of public funds.*”

Maryland Subsidies to Corporate Abortion - Abortion is big business in Maryland. Maryland taxpayers subsidize the abortion industry in Maryland through direct Maryland Medicaid reimbursements to abortion providers, through various state grants and contracts, and through pass-through funding in various state programs. Health insurance carriers are required to provide reproductive health coverage to participate with the Maryland Health Choice program. Programs that utilize public funding for abortion, abortion providers or promotion and other abortion-related activities include the Maryland State Department of Education, Maryland Department of Health, Maryland Family Planning Program, Maternal and Child Health Bureau, the Children's Cabinet, Maryland Council on School Based Health Centers, Maryland Assembly for the Advancement of School Based Health, Community Health Resource Commission, Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP), Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund and even the Maryland Department of Public Works.

MDH is Failing Pregnant Women - The Maryland Department of Health has consistently failed to meet the needs of pregnant women and families in Maryland and appropriations should be withheld until the Department provides an annual report to the Centers for Disease Control to measure the number of abortions committed each year in Maryland, abortion reasons, funding sources and related health complications or injuries.

- The Department has routinely failed to enforce existing state health and safety regulations of abortion clinics enacted in 2012, even after multiple women have been fatally or near fatally injured in botched abortions in Maryland.
- The Department has routinely failed to provide women with information and access to abortion alternatives, including the Maryland Safe Haven Program (see Department of Human Services), affordable adoption programs or referral to quality prenatal care and family planning services that do not promote abortion.
- The Department has demonstrated systemic bias in favor of abortion providers, engaging in active partnerships with Planned Parenthood and other abortion organizations to develop and implement public programs, curriculum and training. In doing so the Department is failing to provide medically accurate information on pregnancy and abortion.
- The Department systemically discriminates against any reproductive health and educational providers who are unwilling to promote abortion and in doing so, suppresses pro-life speech and action in community-based programs and public education.
- The Department fails to collect, aggregate and report data about abortion and the correlation between abortion and maternal mortality, maternal injury, subsequent pre-term birth, miscarriage and infertility.
- The Department is failing to protect the Constitutionally-guaranteed rights of freedom of conscience and religion for health care workers, contributing to the scarcity of medical professions and personnel in Maryland.

- The Department is failing to protect women and girls from sexual abuse and sex trafficking by waiving reporting requirements for abortionists, waiving mandatory reporter requirements for abortionists, and failing to regulate abortion practices.

Pregnancy is not a Disease - The fact that 85% of OB-GYNs in a representative national survey will not participate in abortions is glaring evidence that abortion is not an essential part of women's healthcare. Women have better options for family planning and well woman care, in fact there are 14 federally qualifying health centers for each Planned Parenthood in Maryland.

Abortion is never medically necessary to save the life of a woman - In the rare case of severe pregnancy complications, hospitals, not abortion clinics, may decide to separate the mother and child and make best efforts to sustain the lives of both. This is different from an abortion, which involves the purposeful termination of fetal human life. Prior to the Supreme Court's imposition of their decision in *Roe v. Wade* in 1973, the Maryland legislature had enacted a ban on abortion and only would allow exception for the physical life of the mother, if two physicians agreed that termination of the pregnancy was necessary to avoid the imminent death of the mother. Science has advanced beyond this point to support that both lives can be saved.

Abortion is not Health Care - Abortion is NOT health care and is never medically necessary. Abortion is the violent destruction of a developing human being. Abortion always kills a human child and often causes physical and psychological injury to women. Abortion is the exploitation of women and girls and enables sexual abusers and sex traffickers to continue in the course of their crimes and victimization. No state has enacted a law to prohibit the use of medical intervention in the case of medical emergency including miscarriage or ectopic pregnancy.

Abortion is Black Genocide - Abortion has reached epidemic proportions among people of color with half of all pregnancies of Black women ending in abortion. It is believed that nearly half of all pregnancies of Black women end in abortion. As a result, Black Americans are no longer the leading minority population, dropping second to the Hispanic population. People of color have long been targeted for elimination through sterilization and abortion by eugenicists like Planned Parenthood founder Margaret Sanger. Even today, 78% of abortion clinics are located in Minority communities. As a result abortion has become the leading killer of Black lives. Abortion is the greatest human and civil rights abuse of our time and as a civilized people we cannot continue to justify or subsidize this genocide. For more information please see www.BlackGenocide.org.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to amend this bill to prohibit the awarding of public grant monies to the abortion industry including to nonprofits involved in abortion provision, coordination, education, training or promotion.

We appeal to you to prioritize the state's interest in human life and restore to all people, our natural and Constitutional rights to life, liberty, freedom of speech and religion.