



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 1126

Unemployment Insurance - Child Support Arrearage to Work Pilot Program – Established

TO: Hon. C.T. Wilson, Chair, and the Economic Matters Committee

FROM: Zachary Alberts, Director of Advocacy

The Center for Urban Families (CFUF), a West Baltimore workforce and family-strengthening community-based organization, advocates for legislative initiatives that strengthen urban communities by helping fathers and families achieve stability and economic success.

We are pleased to support Delegate Ruff's HB 1126, which would connect individuals who are unemployed and in arrears under a child support order with employment opportunities in the state, including employment opportunities in state government. The reason this bill is so important to CFUF is because 8,000 individuals owe more than \$120 million in child support arrears in our primary service areas. Having provided workforce training and child support wraparound services for over 25 years, we have seen firsthand how many non-custodial parents are unable to access work and thus fall even further behind in their arrears.

We support any legislation that establishes new and creative ways to connect individuals who have significant barriers and high arrears to the world of work. As with any work program, it is important to ensure that the jobs are high-quality and well-paying. Work should allow a person to provide for themselves and meet their financial obligations while preserving their dignity.

We urge a favorable report.

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