



### **Support Pre-K Expansion (SB0857)**

Dear Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

We are the [Maryland Just Power Alliance](#), a coalition of 3 non-partisan community power organizations: [Action in Montgomery](#) (AIM), [Anne Arundel Connecting Together](#) (ACT), and [People Acting Together in Howard](#) (PATH), representing tens of thousands of Maryland residents. We organize with people in congregations, schools, and neighborhoods to build power for policies that make our communities more fair and livable for everyone. We are asking you to support the Prekindergarten Expansion Grant Modifications and Workgroup Act (SB0857) when it is considered by the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee.

Expanding access to affordable Pre-K has emerged as one of the most important issues in our listening sessions with low- and middle-income families. Many of our children start kindergarten with disadvantages, and the gap widens over time. Pre-K is one of the most effective ways to reduce these educational inequities.

The Prekindergarten Expansion Grant Modifications and Workgroup Act (SB0857) will remove barriers to pre-K expansion in community-based settings by updating the grant-making process. Creating a more accessible and robust pre-K grant system that adds more pre-K seats without removing infant and toddler seats will make a large difference for our children and families. Further, many Maryland childcare providers are small businesses. Making the grant more accessible will support small business development.

We strongly support SB0857 and are counting on you to pass a strong version of this bill out of your committee.

Thank you for your consideration.