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Prince George's County

Health and Government  
Operations Committee

*Subcommittees*

Government Operations  
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Insurance and Pharmaceuticals



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**THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES**  
**ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401**

**Prince George's County - Early Childhood Education Program, High School Child Care Centers, and Fee in Child Support Cases - PG 502-25/HB359**  
**Testimony of Maryland State Delegate Deni Taveras**

Thank you, Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins and committee members. I am here to ask for your favorable report on HB359 - Prince George's County - Early Childhood Education Program, High School Child Care Centers, and Fee in Child Support Cases.

The proposed legislation builds on last year's bill favorably voted out of this committee which established a comprehensive teen support program that aims to address the pressing educational and social challenges faced by teen parents within Prince George's County Public Schools. The purpose of this legislation is to create a funding mechanism for the program through the collection of a \$100 fee in requesting any new, modified, appeal, etc to family law child support cases in circuit court. The funds generated will be used to address child care, transportation, personal and child hygiene, etc. with the goal of supporting teenage parents in completing their high school education.

Prince George's County is 85% African-American and Latino. PGCPs's student body is 40% of Hispanic descent. In Prince George's County, there exists a clear needs gap between the two predominant populations where less than 1 out 5 African American is a teen parent, while 1 out of every 3 Latine student is a teen parent.

Most teen parents are not receiving the support from their families and are forced to drop out of school, attributing their decision to pregnancy or parenthood. Per vital statistics, there were approximately 400 teenagers that gave birth and resided in Prince George's County but only about 120 were in school. With only 40% of teen parents ever managing to obtain a high school diploma, the urgency of this initiative cannot be overstated. This bill aims to significantly alter this poverty cycle trajectory by breaking the potential cycle of poverty for up to 800 students.

The implications of teenage parenthood extend beyond the immediate challenges; they encompass long-term educational and economic prospects for both young parents and their child(ren). This bill enables student parents to get the supplemental financial support they need to get educated and have better career prospects to support their family long term.

In closing, as such I ask this esteemed committee for your favorable report on HB359.