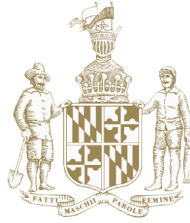


EMILY SHETTY
Legislative District 18
Montgomery County

The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 350
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3181
800-492-7122 Ext. 3181
Emily.Shetty@house.state.md.us



Appropriations Committee
Chair, Health and
Social Services Subcommittee

Rules and Executive
Nominations Committee

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**HB680 -
Children's Cabinet Fund - Renaming and Funding for Grants to Local Management
Boards**

Chair Barnes Chair, Vice Chair Kaiser and esteemed members of the Appropriations Committee, I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of House Bill 680, a bill designed to enable Local Management Boards (LMBs) to better understand, elevate and meet the needs of vulnerable children, youth and families across the State. The Children's Cabinet Fund - Renaming and Funding for Grants to Local Management Boards (LMBs) formalizes a name change the Administration has already adopted, from Children's Cabinet Fund to Children's Cabinet Interagency Fund (CCIF).

More importantly, the bill seeks nominal funding increases for the CCIF: \$3 million in increased grant funding designated for LMBs in FY28 and \$2 million per year over three subsequent years until 2031. There is a cross-file for this bill, SB 668; given ongoing and current need, the Senate bill is being amended to start the funding increase in FY27. While originally set for March 4, 2026, the vote on SB 668 has been deferred.

Since the 1990s, LMBs in 23 counties and the City of Baltimore have been serving an important role as a county-level coordination mechanism, working across the local system to identify and address locally relevant needs, gaps, and opportunities to improve the health, safety, and prosperity of children, youth and families. To do so, LMBs unite service providers in violence prevention, behavioral health, maternal and child health, education and workforce development, housing, and other community-specific obstacles to family stability and the well-being of children and youth.

Mirroring the interagency structure of the Children's Cabinet itself, LMBs ensure local service delivery is as multi-dimensional as the issues they are trying to address. LMBs create opportunities to leverage other resources coming into the community and reduce silos and duplication of efforts. They ensure county-level work is strategic and aligned with the priorities of the Governor's Office for Children and ENOUGH initiative. Because LMBs work directly with both community-based organizations and community members, they provide a unique opportunity to shape the use of State dollars in ways that most effectively address needs and opportunities as they are experienced in the communities themselves.

LMBs are directly funded through CCIF grants, which are budgeted at \$20.5 million in FY27. This is flat funding from FY26, and less than half the \$47 million in funding LMBs received more than a decade ago. Yet in the intervening years, the community members being served have skyrocketed, rising from 250,000 Marylanders before the pandemic to more than 500,000 annually in more recent years. Similarly, according to the Maryland Food Bank, one in five Marylanders more than a decade ago said they had been directly affected by hunger or food security. That number has increased to one in three in more recent years. In the wake of HR1, there is more urgency than ever. As the Governor noted in his recent State of the State, approximately 180,000 Marylanders could lose healthcare coverage, and 680,000 are at risk of losing access to food assistance. LMB's need more resources to meet the growing needs across the state.

LMBs play an important role in improving the well-being of Maryland's children, youth and families. It is through CCIF grants that LMBs are uniquely able to move forward with initiatives driven by the communities in which each works, not by Annapolis.

Thank you for the committee's consideration, and I respectfully request a favorable report on HB 680.