



**Testimony in SUPPORT of
House Bill 628: Human Services – Foster Care Transition Grant Program – Establishment**

Budget and Taxation Committee

Position: Favorable

March 25, 2026

At Strong Schools Maryland, we work to support the faithful implementation and full funding of the promises legislated through the landmark Blueprint for Maryland's Future. The Blueprint envisions a public education system where all students can feel safe and supported to learn and thrive in their school community. It was designed to specifically address systemic inequities that disproportionately impact historically marginalized communities so that every student has the opportunity to succeed and achieve both in school and in life. As a result, **Strong Schools Maryland offers favorable testimony in support of HB 628 – Human Services – Foster Care Transition Grant Program – Establishment** which aims to establish a universal basic income for individuals aging out of the out-of-home placement program.

Students and young adults who transition out of foster care or other out-of-home placement often face significant barriers to stability as they move into adulthood. Without consistent financial support, many of these young people experience housing and transportation insecurity, limited access to education and employment opportunities, increased financial instability, and mental health issues. These challenges can disrupt educational pathways and attendance and make it far more difficult for young people to concentrate in school or pursue postsecondary education, job training, or stable employment when building their future.¹

The proposed bill would establish a program to provide **\$1,000 cash per month for a period of a year** if the individual resided in an out-of-home placement on their eighteenth birthday. This direct financial support would help ensure that transition age students have the resources needed to secure housing, access transportation, pursue education or workforce opportunities, and build a stable foundation as they move into adulthood. Importantly the bill also includes outcome measures for participants, including starting income levels, geographic distribution, employment status, and housing security. These outcomes can help the State to better understand the impact of the program and inform future policy decisions to support transition age students.

The Blueprint is built on the understanding that students need comprehensive support systems to succeed, not only in the classroom, but also in their broader lives and communities. Providing direct economic stability during this critical transition period is an investment in the long-term success of young people who have already navigated significant challenges. Policies such as HB628 complement the Blueprint's

¹ [What Happens to Youth Aging Out of Foster Care \(2025\)](#)

commitment to equitable support systems. When young people have the resources they need, they are better positioned to thrive in their communities.

For these reasons, Strong Schools Maryland urges the Budget and Taxation Committee to issue a favorable report on HB 628.

Please contact Kenzie Funk at kenzie@strongschoolsmaryland.org for additional questions.