

## Testimony in Support of HB1490, March 25, 2026

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Renaye Krug. I'm a Baltimore City resident and I'm currently receiving TCA... for the moment. I've received TCA off and on, I most recently got it back in November. This is the only income that I have to support my children. I've been fleeing domestic violence and have been forced to give up everything I had going for me in my life to get away from it. This is the only way I can afford to pay for anything.

It was frustrating to apply. Even when you jump through all the hoops, there's always something hanging up the process or giving you a hard time. The child support requirement made things very difficult. DSS asked me if I had filed for child support and made it clear my TCA case depended on it. I never knew a good cause exemption existed. I'd already applied for child support, but my TCA was terminated again and they made me reapply. I applied online and there were issues with their system and inter-agency communications. They couldn't get the child support verification due to a technical glitch and I had to go through the whole ordeal again. I had to physically go into the office, ask them to delete my application, and then I filed a paper application. That got me my benefits back for a few months before I had to reapply yet again. Not only am I fleeing domestic violence, I'm also facing my benefits being cut off due to these requirements.

I should never have had to apply for child support to begin with. DSS never advertised exemptions or ways to make things easier. It's hard enough to try and break away and get free from domestic violence, and now people are being forced to get in contact with their abuser by applying for child support just to get benefits. Applying for child support gives your abuser another way to track you down. This bill is so important because there are a lot of people like me going through domestic violence. Lots of other women I've met in the shelter are too afraid to apply for TCA because of this requirement. Even the smallest bit of information allows your abuser to search for you. If you don't know about this exemption, you feel stuck. Without any help, you have to struggle to get things like diapers that aren't covered by food stamps. There's no way out, especially if you're starting over.

Even when I qualified for hardship and did everything I was supposed to do get approved, not knowing about these exemptions from the child support requirement really set me back in dealing with DSS. I had to go months without the assistance I needed. Even when my issues were resolved, DSS closed my case again. It's important to have rules and regulations, but we shouldn't make it so difficult for people to get help they really need, or keep information to themselves that might help. Please vote for HB1490 so no one else has to go through what I went through. Thank you.