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**HB1070/SB539 – Department of Social and Economic Mobility – Workforce Opportunities Grant Program and Fund Support with Amendment**

The Maryland Community Action Partnership (MCAP) supports the intent of HB1070/SB539 and respectfully requests that Community Action Agencies be expressly included as eligible entities under the bill to support implementation and service delivery.

For more than 60 years, Maryland's Community Action Agencies (CAAs) have served as the primary anti-poverty infrastructure across the State. Operating in every jurisdiction, CAAs provide integrated services that address housing instability, workforce access, energy insecurity, food access, financial literacy, behavioral health navigation, and reentry support. The individuals and families served by CAAs are disproportionately impacted by economic disinvestment, structural inequities, and the long term consequences of the failed war on drugs.

HB1070/SB539 seeks to address harms that have had generational impact on low-income communities. Community Action Agencies are uniquely positioned to operationalize that intent. CAAs already serve individuals returning from incarceration, families destabilized by justice involvement, and communities where arrest and conviction rates have historically limited access to employment, housing, and capital.

In many jurisdictions, Community Action Agencies provide reentry navigation and case management, workforce development and credentialing, utility assistance and housing stabilization, financial empowerment and credit repair services, small business and microenterprise technical assistance, and community based outreach in historically underserved neighborhoods. The network infrastructure is in place. The staff are trained. The compliance systems are established. The client base is engaged. Inclusion of Community Action Agencies would ensure that resources authorized under HB1070/SB539 are deployed efficiently, equitably, and in alignment with existing community stabilization efforts.

Accordingly, MCAP respectfully requests that HB1070/SB539 be amended to expressly include Community Action Agencies as eligible entities for funding and program participation. Maryland's CAAs stand ready to partner in advancing the goals of this legislation and ensuring that communities disproportionately harmed by past drug policies receive meaningful access to opportunity and stability.

For these reasons, MCAP urges favorable consideration with amendment to include Community Action Agencies.

Submitted on behalf of MCAP by Carrington & Associates, LLC. Please contact Executive Director, Angela Martin, at [amartin@maryland-cap.org](mailto:amartin@maryland-cap.org) for additional information.