



**Local power, collective voice
for Maryland's children, youth and families**

February 3, 2025

SUPPORT – HB0104 - Unhoused Individuals - Rights and Affirmative Defense

Dear Delegates:

On behalf of the Maryland Association of Local Management Boards, I am writing in support of **HB0104 - Unhoused Individuals - Rights and Affirmative Defense** to support that all unhoused individuals have rights. Unhoused individuals deserve to receive aid and support, not to be criminalized for their circumstances. While the United States Supreme Court has allowed for unhoused people to be punished for sleeping in public spaces, we find this to be inhumane and only creating more barriers to people becoming stable and housed.

Local Management Boards in each county and jurisdiction in the State of Maryland conduct community needs assessments to address the needs of children and families in their respective jurisdiction. We regularly work with unhoused youth and families who have many barriers to overcome to become stably housed. We provide programming across the state to rehouse, prevent eviction, and provide resources to families facing the threat of becoming unhoused. These families have complicated challenges that should not be met with punishment and cruelty from our government. Homelessness in our state is the result of policy failures, and we should do whatever we can to alleviate the threats the unhoused population face.

We urge you to support HB0104 - Unhoused Individuals - Rights and Affirmative Defense to assure the rights of unhoused individuals in the state of Maryland.

Sincerely,

Pamela M. Brown, PhD
Chair