

THE COALITION TO PROTECT MARYLAND'S CHILDREN

Our Mission: To combine and amplify the power of organizations and citizens working together to keep children safe from abuse and neglect. We strive to secure budgetary and public policy resources to make meaningful and measurable improvements in safety, permanence, and wellbeing.



CPMC
COALITION TO PROTECT
MARYLAND'S CHILDREN

HB0570 - Foster Care - Adjacent County Applicants and Reporting Requirements

House Judiciary Committee

February 19, 2026

Position: SUPPORT with Amendments

The Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children is a consortium of organizations and individuals formed in 1992 who are concerned about the care of Maryland's most vulnerable children and work together to educate and promote meaningful child welfare reform. **CPMC urges a favorable report with amendments on HB0570 - Foster Care - Adjacent County Applicants and Reporting Requirements.**

Although we appreciate the intent of the bill sponsor to perhaps help increase the number of available foster care placements for Maryland children, our coalition agrees with current policy of having an applicant become a licensed resource parent through the local department of social services in the jurisdiction where the individual resides. We agree with state's policy under [7.02.25.01\(B\)\(1\)&\(2\)](#):

(1) Ensure that local departments place children with resource parents who will provide children in out-of-home care with safe, nurturing, and trauma-informed environments where their connections with family are supported and maintained; and

(2) Provide a structured framework for resource parents to collaborate in parenting children in out-of-home care, offer mentorship to the children's parents or guardians, and actively participate in the reunification and permanency planning process.

Seeing that there is also currently no prohibition for a child to be placed in an adjacent county when needed, CPMC recommends striking the entirety of 5-505.3 on page 2, lines 8 -19. However, we would like to see the following measures detailed in 5-505.4(1)&(2) pm page 2, lines 21-26 to pass into law, related to quarterly reports from each local department of the number of children in the county who are awaiting placements and the number of foster homes that were vacant for some or all of the reporting period.

Collection of this type of data would be most welcome. It is for these reasons that the Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children **urges a favorable report with amendments on HB0570 - Foster Care - Adjacent County Applicants and Reporting Requirements.**¹

¹ Members of CPMC represented by this written testimony include: the American Academy of Pediatrics - Maryland Chapter, Child Justice, Center for Hope, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA - Baltimore County), The Family Tree, Maryland Association of Resources for Families and Youth (MARFY), Maryland's Children's Alliance, Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV), National Association of Social Workers - MD (NASW), the State Council on Child Abuse & Neglect (SCCAN), and individual members of the coalition.

