



February 3, 2026

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I write in strong support of **HB0384 – Child Support: Capacity of Minors to Initiate and Defend an Action**, sponsored by Delegates Taveras, Fennell, Hill, Kaiser, Kaufman, Lehman, Moreno, Odom, Ruff, Stinnett, Terrasa, and Wims.

Teen parents face profound barriers to stability, and too often lack the legal, financial, and institutional support systems necessary to meet their families' basic needs. HB0384 removes a critical barrier by allowing minor parents to initiate or defend child support actions on behalf of their children—an essential step toward financial stability and family well-being.

Recent Maryland Department of Health data show that teen birth rates remain disproportionately high in communities with fewer economic and legal supports, underscoring the urgency of recognizing the growing need.

This bill recognizes the reality facing young parents and affirms their right to advocate for their children. We urge a favorable report.

Sincerely,

Nicole Lynn Lewis
Founder & CEO
Generation Hope