



**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

*Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Gloria Brown Burnett, Interim Secretary*

February 26, 2026

The Honorable Sandy Bartlett, Chair  
House Judiciary Committee  
100 Lowe House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: TESTIMONY ON HB 1258 - CHILD PLACEMENT SERVICES - ADVERTISING BY UNLICENSED PERSON - PROHIBITION - POSITION: INFORMATION**

Dear Chair Bartlett and Members of the Judiciary Committee:

The Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS) respectfully submits information for its consideration on House Bill 1258 (HB 1258).

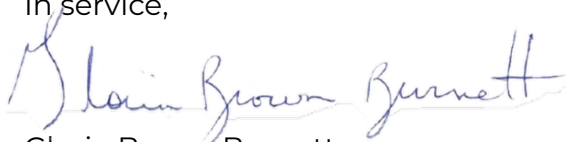
With offices in every one of Maryland's jurisdictions, DHS provides preventative and supportive services, economic assistance, and meaningful connections to employment development and career opportunities to assist Marylanders in reaching their full potential. DHS oversees our Social Services Administration (SSA) and Office of Licensing and Monitoring (OLM), both of which are affected by HB 1258. HB 1258 would prohibit entities not licensed by DHS to provide adoption services in Maryland from advertising within the state, and would enable SSA to investigate violations and issue cease and desist orders across all media platforms for such advertising.

HB 1258 would create a new statutory prohibition against advertising adoption services and SSA would be responsible for enforcing the rule. Implementing HB 1258 would require additional resources and necessitate dedicated personnel to enable SSA to manage new investigative responsibilities outside current agency expertise and operations. HB 1258 would authorize SSA to investigate alleged violations across decentralized digital platforms like social media, streaming services, and text messaging. To enforce these violations, DHS would need new funding for specialized staff and monitoring technology to track out-of-state advertisers targeting Maryland residents. Without dedicated resources, HB 1258 would put the Department in a position to be the sole enforcement mechanism for new advertising laws, which is a role we are not presently equipped to serve. [COMAR 07.05.03.03](#) applies administrative

standards to licensed agencies, and requires private adoption agencies to be licensed in accordance with [COMAR 07.05.01](#). We employ staff who are trained to provide this oversight. However, DHS is not currently equipped to meet the expanded statutory responsibility to track advertisers with whom we do not regularly interact, as HB 1258 would require, if passed.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide information to the Committee for consideration during your deliberations. If you require additional information, please contact Justin Hayes, Acting Director of Government Affairs, at [justin.hayes1@maryland.gov](mailto:justin.hayes1@maryland.gov).

In service,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gloria Brown Burnett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "G".

Gloria Brown Burnett  
Interim Secretary