



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

March 11, 2026

The Honorable Jheanelle K. Wilkins, Chair
House Ways and Means Committee
130 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen St
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: TESTIMONY ON HB1305 - STATE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM - REPORTING -
POSITION: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS**

Dear Chair Wilkins and Members of the Ways and Means Committee:

The Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS) thanks the Committee for its consideration and respectfully requests a favorable with amendments report on House Bill 1305 (HB 1305).

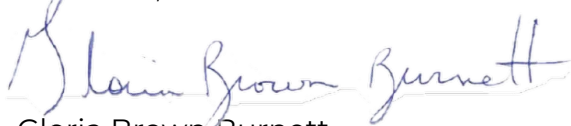
With offices in every one of Maryland's jurisdictions, DHS provides preventive and supportive services, economic assistance, and meaningful connections to employment development and career opportunities to help Marylanders reach their full potential. Our Social Services Administration (SSA) implements the Out-of-Home Care (OOH) program, which is affected by HB 1305. HB 1305 would require the State Department of Education (MSDE) and DHS to track and report the number of foster youth who enroll in college and their six-year graduation rates, alongside comparative data on children not in the child welfare system, to show disparities to the General Assembly as part of their annual reporting.

HB 1305 would provide an excellent source of data to help policymakers identify disparities in academic performance between foster youth and their peers. DHS and our sister agencies will further utilize this data to assess program effectiveness and plan for stronger support of foster youth through improving coordination, data collection, and accountability. Including comparative data on non-foster care peers will highlight the unique challenges that foster youth face, and could lead to changes to the allocation of resources to target areas of need that support better outcomes.

DHS is offering one simple, friendly amendment to adjust where the current bill text may be duplicative of an existing statute. DHS currently shares data with the Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center (MLDSC), which produces a [Foster Care and Higher Education Dashboard](#). This dashboard reports on the rate of foster youth enrolled in institutions of higher education by placement type, type of financial support provided to children in foster care, and the graduation rate of foster children from institutions of higher education by age 25. This portion of HB 1305 would duplicate the existing requirement, as the MLDSC dashboard exists pursuant to [Education Article § 24-703.1](#). This portion of the Education Article already requires the MLDSC to annually produce, on or before December 15th of each year, the dashboard. As such, lines 13 and 14 on page two of HB 1305 that read “**(12) THE NUMBER OF FOSTER YOUTH WHO ENROLL IN COLLEGE AND GRADUATE WITHIN 6 YEARS**” appear to be duplicative.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide favorable testimony with amendments 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.

In service,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gloria Brown Burnett". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gloria" being the most prominent.

Gloria Brown Burnett
Interim Secretary

Proposed Amendments:

Amendment No. 1:

On page 2, line 11, strike the removal brackets around “and”, then beginning on page 2 line 12, insert a period after “arrests” and strike the remainder of line 11, and 12 and 13 in their entirety, beginning with “; **AND**”.