



DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

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

March 4, 2026

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

RE: TESTIMONY ON HB 1034 - FAMILY LAW - CHILD CARE ENTITIES - CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT - TRAINING AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS - POSITION: FAVORABLE

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 report on House Bill 1034 (HB 1034).

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. Our Social Services Administration implements the Child Protective Services (CPS) program which is affected by HB1034. HB1034 mandates that all employees, contractors, and volunteers at licensed child care entities complete specific safety and legal training regarding child abuse reporting within six months of hire and every two years thereafter, and requires compliance reporting.

HB1034 would close safety gaps among childcare providers by addressing the lack of standardized, recurring training for all individuals with access to children. Child care center employees are required to serve as mandated reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect under [COMAR 13A.16.07.02](#). There is currently no obligation for these mandated reporters to participate in training to help identify the signs of child abuse or neglect, and there is no requirement for the operator of a child care center to verify employees are trained. HB1034 would solve these omissions by requiring providers of childcare services to ensure employees, volunteers and contractors are trained to identify signs of abuse or neglect. Additionally, the legislation ensures training is current by requiring refresher courses every two years. Without training, mandated

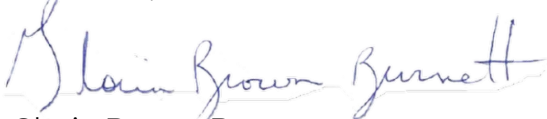
reporters more frequently report suspected child abuse or neglect, and fewer reports are substantiated. As a result, untrained mandated reporters increase costs and draw limited resources from children who need interventions for their safety.

Furthermore, the bill shifts accountability for training from individuals to their employers by requiring childcare service employers to proactively audit their staff or face potential loss of their operating license.

HB1034 would enhance and support DHS programs by training thousands of community professionals to more accurately recognize signs of child maltreatment and encourage appropriate intervention. Training for mandatory reporters would also reduce misreporting poverty-related conditions as neglect. DHS has been moving towards a framework of “Mandated Supporters,” and our training helps professionals distinguish between neglect (unwillingness to provide care) and poverty (inability to provide due to lack of resources). The distinction helps ensure that DHS resources are directed in a way that best serves children and families — by addressing abuse cases, or providing families with the economic and social support they need.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide favorable testimony 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 written in a cursive style with a large initial "G".

Gloria Brown Burnett
Interim Secretary