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Position: FAV

NUMBER OF CHILDREN WHO HAVE BEEN RETAINED IN A GRADE,
DISAGGREGATED BY GRADE (§ 5-1312 (C)(4))

Table 7: The number of foster students, by grade, who were retained in a grade (SY 2023-2024)

Grade	Students Not Promoted
Elementary School (grades K-5)	*
Middle School (grades 6-8)	*
High School (grades 9-12)	126
Grade 9	52
Grade 10	25
Grade 11	*
Grade 12	40
All Grades	141

Table 8: The number of foster students, by student group, who were retained in a grade (SY 2023-2024)

Student Group	Grade	Students Not Promoted
Female	All Grades	70
Male	All Grades	71
American Indian or Alaska Native	All Grades	*
Asian	All Grades	*
Black or African American	All Grades	88
Hispanic/Latino of Any Race	All Grades	12
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	All Grades	*
Two or More Races	All Grades	*
White	All Grades	35

Kaiser HB1305 Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Anne Kaiser

Position: FAV

ANNE R. KAISER
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Vice Chair
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony in Support of HB 1305: State Child Welfare System - Reporting

Chair Wilkins and esteemed members of the Ways and Means Committee, it is my pleasure to come before you and offer testimony in favor of **House Bill 1305: State Child Welfare System – Reporting**. This bill is designed to create a data landscape to enhance better policymaking.

Students involved in the child welfare system frequently encounter substantial barriers to educational success. Placement changes often result in multiple school transitions, which can disrupt learning, delay enrollment, and cause students to lose academic progress. As a result, children in foster care are more likely to struggle academically, require special education services, and face obstacles to graduating from high school and/or entering college. Despite the seriousness of these challenges, data about fostering youth in the education system is often fragmented across agencies and difficult to analyze comprehensively. **HB 1305** aims to improve the collection and reporting of critical information, including school stability and the educational supports students receive. This data will allow the state to identify patterns, evaluate existing policies, and develop more effective strategies to support these students.

Legislators currently receive data on how foster youth perform across various educational metrics from the Maryland State Department of Education's (MSDE) *MD Public Schools Students in the State Child Welfare System Report* and the Maryland Longitudinal Data System's (MLDS) *Higher Education Participation for Youth in Foster Care in High School* dashboard. MSDE's report includes information about student mobility, grade retention, dropout rates, and absenteeism of youth in foster care. MLDS's report includes information on postsecondary outcomes, including college-going patterns, placement type while in care, access to financial aid, and college graduation rates. However, neither report includes comparison data with non-foster care peers, which would help make these data useful for us as policy makers.

As drafted, **HB1305** adds a requirement to include comparison data in MSDE's annual reporting requirements. The bill also requires a one-time study to identify the best practices from other states, identify needs and gaps in services that could improve educational outcomes, and provide recommendations for improving data collection and reporting requirements.

While Maryland has created great programs to support foster youth throughout their educational endeavors, it is essential to continue examining and adopting best practices from around the country. Keeping policies current and responsive to these evolving needs will help ensure foster youth have greater opportunities to succeed and provide legislators with the data necessary to craft more effective, evidence-based policies. I urge a favorable report on **House Bill 1305**. Thank you.

HB1305 CPMC FAV WM.pdf

Uploaded by: Diana Philip

Position: FAV

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.



HB1305 – State Child Welfare System - Reporting

House Ways & Means Committee

March 11, 2026

Position: SUPPORT

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 on HB1305 - State Child Welfare System – Reporting.**

Our coalition appreciates all that the Maryland General Assembly has accomplished over the years to support youth that have experienced out-of-home care as part of the child welfare system as they transition into adulthood, including passing laws making the costs of college education more feasible. We welcome any data collection about the number that do enroll and graduate to help assess efforts in making access to a college education more of reality for these youth.

We welcome any efforts that can be made to further the success of these young people who have been placed in the care of the state. It is for these reasons that the Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children **urges a favorable report HB1305 - State Child Welfare System – Reporting.**¹

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

HB 1305 State Child Welfare System - Reporting FAV

Uploaded by: Hayley Lichterman

Position: FAV



NATASHA DARTIGUE
PUBLIC DEFENDER
KEITH LOTRIDGE
DEPUTY PUBLIC DEFENDER
HANNIBAL KEMERER
CHIEF OF STAFF
ELIZABETH HILLIARD
DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

BILL: House Bill 1305 - State Child Welfare System - Reporting

FROM: Maryland Office of the Public Defender

POSITION: Favorable

DATE: 3/11/26

The Maryland Office of the Public Defender (OPD) respectfully requests that the Committee issue a **favorable report** on House Bill 1305, Denial or Interference with Visitation Rights. House Bill 1305 strengthens protections for parents and children by ensuring that court-ordered visitation is meaningfully restored when it is unjustifiably denied or interfered with.

This testimony is provided by OPD's Parental Defense Division (PDD). PDD represents parents from all 24 counties in Maryland who are involved in the various stages of Child In Need of Assistance (CINA) and Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) cases. Our multidisciplinary legal team, including dedicated attorneys, licensed social workers, and parent advocates with lived-experience in the DSS system, ensures that families receive high quality legal representation.

Decades of research show that youth who spend time in foster care often experience significantly worse life outcomes than their peers across nearly every major measure of adult stability, including housing, education, employment, and involvement with the criminal legal system. The most widely cited longitudinal research on this issue, the Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth conducted by Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, followed young people as they transitioned from foster care into adulthood.¹

By ages 23 and 24, nearly 40 percent of former foster youth in the study reported experiencing homelessness or housing instability after leaving care. Many reported periods of couch-surfing, staying in shelters, or lacking stable housing altogether.² The same body of research also found substantial involvement with the criminal legal system. By age 21, nearly 30 percent of young men who had been in foster care reported having been incarcerated.

¹ Mark E. Courtney et al., Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth, Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago (2011) (available at <https://www.chapinhall.org/wp-content/uploads/Midwest-Eval-Outcomes-at-Age-26.pdf>).

² *Id.*, at 10-12 (2011).

Educational outcomes are similarly troubling. While most children in the general population graduate from high school and many pursue higher education, young people who have experienced foster care face significant barriers to educational attainment. Only a small percentage ultimately earn a college degree.³

For policymakers to effectively improve the foster care system, they must have access to clear and reliable information about the outcomes experienced by young people who interact with that system. However, comprehensive public reporting on these outcomes is often limited or inconsistent. Without accurate data on issues such as housing stability, educational attainment, employment, and justice system involvement, it is difficult to determine whether current policies are working or where reforms are needed.

House Bill 1305 represents an important step toward addressing this gap. By requiring improved data collection and reporting regarding outcomes for youth involved in Maryland's foster care system, the legislation will provide policymakers, advocates, and the public with a clearer understanding of how children in care are faring.

The State assumes the profound responsibility of raising children through the foster care system. It must also ensure transparency and accountability regarding the outcomes those children experience. Collecting and reporting meaningful data will allow Maryland to identify gaps, target resources more effectively, and implement evidence-based reforms that improve the lives of vulnerable children.

For these reasons, the Maryland Office of the Public Defender respectfully urges this Committee to issue a favorable report on House Bill 1305.

Submitted by: Maryland Office of the Public Defender

Authored by: Hayley Lichterman, hayley.lichterman@maryland.gov

³ *Id.*, at page 20.

HB1305_MARFY_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Therese Hessler

Position: FAV



March 11, 2026

House Ways & Means Committee

House Bill 1305 – State Child Welfare System – Reporting

Position: SUPPORT

Chair Wilkins, Vice Chair Feldmark, and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Association of Resources for Families and Youth (MARFY) respectfully submits this testimony in strong support of House Bill 1305, “State Child Welfare System – Reporting.” This legislation enhances transparency and accountability by requiring the State Department of Education (MSDE), in cooperation with the Department of Human Services (DHS), to include comprehensive data on children and foster youth in annual reporting and to develop a report with actionable recommendations for improving outcomes for students involved in the State child welfare system.

As an association representing licensed child-placing agencies, treatment providers, group homes, and independent living programs across Maryland, MARFY members see firsthand how data or the lack of it profoundly influences policy decisions affecting foster youth’s educational trajectories. Accurate, disaggregated reporting is essential to understanding patterns of academic stability, attendance, disciplinary actions, and importantly post-secondary outcomes such as college enrollment and completion.

HB1305 requires MSDE to report detailed education data for children in the foster care system including placement stability, individualized education plan status, dropout rates, attendance, disciplinary measures, and high school completion. Critically, this bill adds the number of foster youth who enroll in college and graduate within six years which is a metric not currently reported and mandates comparison to peers not in foster care where appropriate.

Accurate, disaggregated data helps to create a roadmap for effective intervention and strategic next steps for reforms and policies. When legislators, educators, service providers, and stakeholders can see where disparities exist and how they evolve over time, targeted supports can be deployed more efficiently and equitably. Strong data supports better decisions about resource allocation, intervention design, and evaluation of programs intended to stabilize learning environments and strengthen long-term success for foster youth.

By requiring comparison data between students in the State child welfare system and those not in foster care where appropriate, HB1305 brings much-needed context that will illuminate systemic gaps and guide strategic investments in evidence-based supports for foster youth.

For these reasons, MARFY respectfully urges a favorable report on House Bill 1305. Thank you for your consideration.

For more information call or email:

Therese M. Hessler | 301-503-2576 | therese@ashlargr.com

HB1305_DHS_FWA.pdf

Uploaded by: Gloria Brown-Burnett

Position: FWA



DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

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).

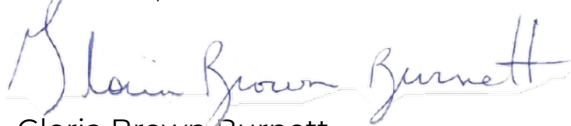
With offices in every one of Maryland's jurisdictions, DHS provides preventive and supportive services, economic assistance, and meaningful connections to employment development and career opportunities to help Marylanders reach their full potential. Our Social Services Administration (SSA) implements 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,



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**”.