



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 30

State Finance and Procurement - Appropriation Reductions (Board of Public Works Budget Reduction Clarification Act)

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

January 21, 2021

Submitted by Stacey Jefferson and Julia Gross, Co-Chairs

Member Agencies:

Advocates for Children and Youth
Baltimore Jewish Council
Behavioral Health System Baltimore
CASH Campaign of Maryland
Catholic Charities
Episcopal Diocese of Maryland
Family League of Baltimore
Fuel Fund of Maryland
Health Care for the Homeless
Homeless Persons
Representation Project
Job Opportunities Task Force
League of Women Voters of Maryland
Loyola University Maryland
Maryland Catholic Conference
Maryland Center on Economic Policy
Maryland Community Action
Partnership
Maryland Family Network
Maryland Hunger Solutions
Paul's Place
Public Justice Center
St. Vincent de Paul of Baltimore
Welfare Advocates

Marylanders Against Poverty

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Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) strongly supports SB 30, which will help the Board of Public Works (BPW) make better-informed decisions about funding for essential state services. In order for Maryland's leaders to make the best possible decisions, they need to understand how those actions will affect Marylanders' lives.

Under existing state law, the BPW is only required to provide very minimal public notice before voting on reductions of up to 25 percent in already approved state fund. If the Board was to propose cuts that would take away much-needed supports from people already struggling to make ends meet, MAP and its members would want the opportunity to explain to BPW members how those cuts would affect Maryland families.

Without adequate public notice, it is challenging for organizations like MAP to even evaluate the impacts of cuts the BPW is considering. A 10-day notification period provides a reasonable amount of time for individuals and organizations to review proposed cuts to services and understand how they will affect people living in poverty. Passing HB 133 would benefit everyone by providing BPW members more information about the effects of budget cuts prior to voting, allowing state leaders to avoid unintended negative consequences for the hard-working Maryland families whose economic security may depend on budget decisions.

Further, the bill also makes some important clarifications that maintain the reasonable limits on the BPW's ability to make budget reductions. Ensuring that the Board can only cut up to 25 percent from one line item for an entire fiscal year protects public services from being eliminated completely without adequate legislative review.

MAP appreciates your consideration and urges the committee to issue a favorable report for SB 30.

Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) is a coalition of service providers, faith communities, and advocacy organizations advancing statewide public policies and programs necessary to alleviate the burdens faced by Marylanders living in or near poverty, and to address the underlying systemic causes of poverty.