



Maryland Alliance for
Racial Equity in Education

Testimony in SUPPORT of SB0299 – Human Services – Trauma Informed Care – Commission and Training

Finance Committee

February 8, 2021

Dear Honorable Chair Kelley and Members of the Finance Committee:

The Maryland Alliance for Racial Equity in Education (MAREE) is pleased to provide testimony in **SUPPORT** of SB 299- Human Services-Trauma Informed Care-Commission and Training. MAREE is a coalition of education advocacy, civil rights, and community-based organizations committed to eliminating racial disparities in Maryland's education system. Our coalition **SUPPORTS** establishing the Commission on Trauma-Informed Care to coordinate a statewide initiative to prioritize the trauma-responsive and trauma-informed delivery of State services that impact children, youth, families, and older adults across our state. This policy will provide much needed guidance on how to effectively and thoughtfully best serve some of our most vulnerable populations experiencing trauma.

According to data from The Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative, 56% of Baltimore's children and 41.6% of children across Maryland have experienced one or more major traumatic events. Left unaddressed, each of these adverse childhood experiences can have a devastating impact on health outcomes and lead to an increased risk of addiction, incarceration, and other risky behaviors. The CDC used survey data from more than 144,000 adults from 25 states and found that 60% reported at least one bad childhood experience. One in six people across the United States has experienced four or more kinds of adverse childhood experiences. Women, Indigenous individuals and Black Americans were more likely to experience four or more of these experiences.

Trauma is experienced by individuals across our state--from Baltimore City to Hagerstown to Silver Spring to the Eastern Shore---it is not isolated although it is sometimes overlooked. And as the Covid-19 pandemic continues to devastate families and communities, children and youth reporting traumatic experiences are on the rise. In a study released September 2020 by the National Institutes of Health, it notes that " more than 20% of all-aged children and more than 40% of children under 12 in the United States experienced food insecurity since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic". If this basic need is not being met, we can only imagine the trauma being caused by deaths in families, social isolation and fear of infection amongst children, youth and older citizens. This study goes on to state that the only possible solutions to deal with the short and long-term effects of such trauma are: identification of those in need of care and well thought out interventions and plans to ensure those identified receive such care. MAREE sees the creation of the Commission on Trauma-Informed Care as forward thinking and a step in the right direction to ensure some of our most vulnerable populations have access to proper mental and social-emotional services and support to survive and thrive.

For these reasons, MAREE strongly urges a favorable report on SB0299.

MAREE Coalition

NAACP State Conference
ACLU MD
CASA
Advocates for Children and Youth
Urban Teachers

Greater Baltimore Urban League
Baltimore Corps
Strong Schools MD
The Education Trust
Black & Brown Coalition

Family League of Baltimore



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