



## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 299

Human Services-Trauma-Informed Care-Commission and Training

Senate Finance Committee

February 11, 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

Stacey Jefferson, Co-Chair  
P: 410-637-1900 ext 8578  
C: 443-813-9231

E: [stacey.jefferson@bhsbaltimore.org](mailto:stacey.jefferson@bhsbaltimore.org)

Julia Gross, Co-Chair  
P: 410-528-0021x6029

E: [jgross@mdhungersolutions.org](mailto:jgross@mdhungersolutions.org)

**Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) supports SB 299.** This bill would establish 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.

**ACEs, or Adverse Childhood Experiences, are a category of early life traumas which negatively impact long-term health, prosperity, and social mobility outcomes.** ACEs encompass traumatic experiences at all levels of severity including emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, neglect, domestic and intimate partner violence, substance use in the home, mental illness in the home, the incarceration of a household member, and the separation and/or divorce of adult caregivers. ACEs have the potential to hinder an individual's neurological, socio-behavioral, and emotional development, all of which have lifelong repercussions for a child's health and well-being.<sup>1</sup>

**MAP supports SB 299 because children living in deep poverty are five times more likely to experience abuse and neglect and other adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), which begins a lifelong struggle with negative mental, behavioral, and physical health outcomes.**<sup>2</sup> Having 3 or more ACEs is typically the threshold for these negative outcomes. Recent data suggest that more than 40% of Maryland children have at least one ACE— 15.4% have had two or more.<sup>3</sup>

**The CDC estimates lifetime costs associated with ACEs at approximately \$2 trillion nationwide.** Enacting measures that prevent and address childhood trauma not only work to improve the public health of our state, but also have a high rate of return on investment and decrease healthcare, education, and welfare program costs in the long term.

**The Trauma Informed Commission established in SB 299 ensures that our state provide trauma informed services in a coordinated way to Maryland's children and families.** It will be incredibly valuable for Commission members to receive ongoing training on trauma, as well, and MAP hopes that education will trickle down to service providers across the State.

<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:  
[https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/acestudy/index.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=h](https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/acestudy/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=h)

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/facestudy/index.html>

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:  
[https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/can/CAN-factsheet\\_2020.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/can/CAN-factsheet_2020.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Baltimore Sun. More than 40 percent of Maryland children experience traumatic events. October 19, 2017.

Maryland must continue to enact policies that that help to improve outcomes for Marylanders who have experienced trauma. **MAP appreciates your consideration and urges a favorable report on SB 299.**

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***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.*