



MARIAN HOUSE
Women Moving from Dependence to Independence

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB28

Home – and Community-Based Services Waiver – Participation and Applications

January 25, 2022

Senator Delores G. Kelley
Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Testimony of Marian House in Support of SB28

Dear Senator Delores G. Kelley and Members of the Finance Committee,

Marian House is a holistic, healing community for women and their children who are in need of housing and support services. Marian House provides comprehensive support services to assist women experiencing poverty. **I write to urge you to support Senate Bill 28 – Home – and Community-Based Services Waiver – Participation and Applications.**

Almost forty years ago, Marian House was opened to provide reentry supports for women leaving incarceration as Sisters and laywomen recognized that lack of support contributed to recidivism rates. Today, we have also expanded to serve women with histories of trauma including poverty, homelessness, incarceration, neglect, abuse, substance abuse, and more. Since our opening, we have assisted women in reinventing themselves through services such as: counseling, substance abuse treatments, GED tutoring, job training, and providing both long- and short-term housing. All the women we have served have overcome obstacles on their journeys to become contributing members of society in the Baltimore area. These obstacles include waiting to apply for Medicare and Medicaid waivers.

According to the United States Census Bureau, in 2019 21.2% of Baltimore’s citizens lived below Maryland’s poverty rate of \$12,880 per a one-person household. At Marian House, all of the women we serve live at or below the poverty line. With the current waitlist system in place, members of this population are waiting a longer period of time either without health insurance, or paying for insurance they cannot afford. Some families face the impossible and inhumane decision to choose between paying for food, housing, or basic needs, or paying for care. By enacting Senate Bill 28, more Marylanders will be able to afford insurance sooner by having quicker access to the necessary waivers provided by the Maryland Department of Health.

This bill is crucial to Maryland’s most vulnerable populations. On behalf of the women we serve at Marian House, I respectfully urge you to take the call to action in **SUPPORT of SB28**

Thank you for your support,



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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie Allston". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Katie Allston, LCSW-C

President and C.E.O.