

Testimony in Support of HB 168
Human Service – Temporary Cash Assistance – Calculation of Benefits
House Appropriations Committee, January 31, 2023

Testimony of Kenyaree Slater-
Baltimore County, Maryland

I, Kenyaree Slater, am writing a letter in support of House Bill 168.

As if the ongoing issues with the administration of the Temporary Cash Assistance program aren't harmful enough to families, every month the Department of Human Services chooses to reduce our TCA benefits because we also qualify for subsidized housing. If I were homeless, the Department would not be assisting me in finding stable shelter for my family and me. So why would a department, whose mission is to help us, have a policy that pushes us closer to instability? Why should they be allowed to penalize me by taking away my cash assistance because I receive rental assistance? Even though I live in subsidized housing, I still need *all* of my TCA. It benefits no one if the Department can punish me and so many others for having a need. We should keep our full TCA benefit amount; the benefits that are rightfully ours. This is why I support House Bill 168.

As a single mother of two young children, being allowed to keep \$60 each month would make a world of difference. Right now, I do not own a car, so I have to pay for transportation. And if my children miss the bus to go to school, that's another expense I must cover. Most of my other monthly expenses go towards other necessities like food, clothing, and medication when my children get sick. There have been times where my children have needed extra necessities in a month, such as coats in the colder months. With my benefit reduced, I often find myself in a financial dilemma where I might have to choose between making sure my children have the items they need and making sure we have a roof over our heads. An extra \$60 per month would help cover these unanticipated expenses and provide some ease.

Please support House Bill 168.

Thank you.