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March 4, 2024

To Whom it May Concern:

TIME Organization, Inc. strongly supports House Bill 1136, which will designate funding for Youth Services Bureau (YSB) within the State's Budget. TIME formerly received funding as a Youth Services Bureau and provided needed mental health and diversion services to Baltimore City Youth.

TIME YSB provided effective services to our community and was able to be responsive to local needs of youth and families. TIME offered youth and their families a safe place to address difficult issues such as truancy, violence, trauma, bullying, depression, and suicidal ideation. The return of designated funding for Youth Services Bureaus like TIME would guarantee that families in Baltimore City had a resource they trusted in times of need. Youth Services Bureaus are mandated in state law to serve youth and families by providing group and family counseling, information and referral services, crisis intervention including suicide assessments, and substance use assessments and referrals. Designated funding for Youth Services Bureaus makes sense to ensure that the State continues to have a network of programs providing these services. The funding in this bill would allow TIME to re-establish its YSB in Baltimore City.

HB 1136 would increase the prevention and intervention services desperately needed to address growing youth mental health needs in our young people. A quarter of Maryland's children and adolescents have one or more diagnosed emotional, behavioral, or developmental condition. And an alarming 13% of children and adolescents report having anxiety or depression.

The funding this bill provides would increase services desperately needed to address spiking incidents of juvenile crime and help to make sure that the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2022 is successful by providing community-based programs for youth. The services are proven to work in keeping young people out of the criminal justice system, with Youth Services Bureaus consistently having a 95% success rate in diverting youth from juvenile services.

I respectfully request that you support HB 1136 to designate funding for Youth Services Bureau by voting in favor of this legislation.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ditte Moeller".

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