



HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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Senator Clarence K. Lam, Senate Delegation Chair
Howard County Delegation
420 Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Delegate Vanessa E. Atterbeary, House Delegation Chair
Howard County Delegation
101 House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: TESTIMONY OF SUPPORT: Ho. Co. 35-20 – Howard County Long Reach Head Start Center

Dear Senate Chair Lam and House Chair Atterbeary,

I am proud to support Ho. Co. 35-20, which would establish funding for the Community Action Council of Howard County (CAC) for the purposes of site renovation expenses associated with the development of an Early Childhood Education Center in Long Reach.

The CAC operates three certified Head Start and Pre-K centers in Columbia and one center in Ellicott City. These centers provide 3-to-5 year old children from income eligible families with free preschool. CAC's early childhood education services are comprehensive and include additional features such as family engagement, mental health consulting, and nutritional assistance. This bond initiative will allow the CAC to expand its Head Start and Pre-K services to a fifth location in the Long Reach Village Center. This location will provide services for an estimated 80 children across four classrooms.

As a Howard County Councilman, I had the distinct pleasure to represent the Long Reach community for more than 12 years. As Howard County Executive, I am committed to stabilizing the Long Reach Village Center so that it can serve our community's needs. My Administration recently funded the Howard County Community Partnership Grant with the Ellicott City-Columbia Lions Club which enabled the CAC to purchase a new bus that will safely transport 35 preschoolers. Early education is critical to helping our young children from low-income families become school-ready. Children enrolled in Head Start are 31% less likely to be held back a grade, and they have a higher likelihood of graduating high school and attending college. Unfortunately, many of our parents lack access to transportation or their work prevents them from being able to drive their child to school. A family's socioeconomic status should never stop a child from receiving appropriate educational and developmental services.

I urge your support for Ho. Co. 35-20 so that Howard County's most vulnerable children can get the head start they need to succeed.

All the Best,

Calvin Ball
Howard County Executive