



HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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Calvin Ball
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February 18, 2021

Senator Cory McCray, Chair
Senate Public Safety, Transportation and the Environment Subcommittee
3 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21041

Delegate Keith Haynes, Chair
House Public Safety and Administration Subcommittee
House Office Building, Room 121
Annapolis, MD 21041

Re: FY 2022 Restoration of Funding for Local Management Boards

Dear Chair McCray and Chair Haynes,

The work of Local Management Boards is key to ensuring Maryland's children, youth and families have the resources they need to thrive. During a global pandemic, the work of our boards is more critical than ever in our communities and among our most vulnerable residents. Every day, our State's 24 Local Management Boards work to improve outcomes for Maryland families.

Over the last 12 years, Local Management Boards have seen a dramatic decrease in annual funding from \$53 million roughly \$18 million. Despite these reductions, our boards remain committed to carefully balancing meeting community demands with less resources. Restoring funding levels from FY 2021 for FY 2022 will help ensure LMB's can continue to meet the growing needs in our communities.

In 2020, our Local Children's Board completed a strategic planning process and developed a Community Plan for Howard County children, youth, and families identified the following critical priorities:

- Increase affordable and quality education and training
- Improve food access for families
- Increase inclusiveness, awareness and coordination of resources to meet the needs of each community
- Expand access to affordable and quality behavioral health care

In the face of navigating the challenges of COVID-19, Howard County aims to maintain our commitment to addressing these priorities and secure the necessary resources to meet and expand our goals:

- Our board has dispersed \$1.3 million dollars in CARES Act funding through the county's HoCo S.T.R.I.V.E.S. (Strategies to Reach an Inclusive Vision and Equitable Solutions) initiative that provides both virtual learning supports and in-person instruction to selected middle school students at no cost to their families.
- In an effort to reduce the digital equity gap, we are providing free internet services for families in need, expanding broadband services, and providing free Wi-Fi hotspots.



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- The pandemic has also highlighted the realities of food insecure families. Roving Radish is Howard County's subsidized food program that provides affordable healthy meal kits sourced from local and regional farms. Since the start of pandemic, more than 1,000 boxes and more than 4,000 meal kits have been distributed to families across the county.

These services and programs have provided necessary assistance and stability for children and families in Howard County during these challenging and uncertain economic times. Maryland's Local Management Boards help maintain community-based programs like these that provide children and families the tools they need to thrive.

Thank you for your continued partnership and I ask for your support in restoring funding for Fiscal Year 2022 and further investing in critical services for our Local Management Boards.

All the Best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Calvin Ball', is written over a horizontal line.

Calvin Ball
Howard County Executive