



Testimony in Opposition to Senate Bill 490
Human Services - Youth Services Bureaus – Funding

TO: Chair McIntosh and Members of the House Appropriations Committee
FROM: Demaune A. Millard, President & CEO, Family League of Baltimore
DATE: March 19, 2020

Family League of Baltimore (Family League) opposes Senate Bill 490, Human Services - Youth Services Bureaus – Funding. This bill would create a mandatory funding minimum for all eligible Youth Service Bureaus and eliminates competitive funding for these entities, currently at the discretion of Local Management Boards.

Family League of Baltimore (Family League) has served as the Local Management Board (LMB) for Baltimore City since 1991. As defined, “the core function of the Local Management Boards remains identifying priorities and targeting resources for a jurisdiction’s communities. The Boards serve as the coordinator of collaboration for child and family services. They bring together local child-serving agencies, local child providers, clients of services, families, and other community representatives to empower local stakeholders in addressing the needs of and setting priorities for their communities.”¹

Family League is a careful steward of the funds awarded by City, State, Federal, and private entities, employing a best practice of braiding these funds together to maximize the impact of each dollar invested. We have concerns that fencing off critical, community-informed funding priorities will have negative consequences, including the potential disruption of funding and services for many of our partners.

SB 490 may result in reduced funding for other local programs that provide similar youth services. In Baltimore, we want to foster closer and more strategic partnerships with these entities while focusing on addressing youth homelessness and young people between the ages of 16 to 24 not enrolled in school or employed. Unintended consequences arise from the prevention of Local Management Boards from utilizing the state’s Children’s Cabinet Interagency Fund to leverage innovative supports. As the Department of Juvenile Services would be required to provide programmatic oversight for Youth Service Bureaus as prescribed in SB 490, the ability to apply community-driven and responsive interventions would be limited.

We hope you will vote unfavorably on SB 490 which, while well intended, ultimately may circumvent data- and community-informed funding priorities which support improved outcomes for Baltimore City youth.

For more information contact Margo Quinlan, Public Policy Manager, at mquinlan@familyleague.org

¹ Maryland Governor’s Office for Children, “Local Management Boards.” <https://goc.maryland.gov/lmb/>