



## Senate Bill 784

### *Department of Juvenile Services – Youth Service Bureau – Budget Appropriation*

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Budget & Taxation Committee

Date: March 7, 2017

From: Natasha Mehu & Barbara Zektick

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** SB 784 as it would have a significant impact on Local Management Boards' funding and decision-making authority.

SB 784 would move funding and oversight for Youth Services Bureaus from the Governor's Office for Children's (GOC) Children's Cabinet Interagency Fund (CCIF) to the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS). As funding for children and family services, including those for Youth Services Bureaus, has traditionally been awarded to Local Management Boards for local distribution, the shift could result in a cut to local board funding. It would also circumvent the boards' authority to make funding decisions based on the specific needs of their communities.

Currently, Local Management Boards receive funding through the CCIF. In turn, they award funds to community-based strategies and programs, such as Youth Services Bureaus, to help deliver services that align with the local needs assessment and community plans. Local management boards make funding decisions based upon the ability of a program to locally address a critical need, fill a gap in services, meet community priorities, and demonstrate improved outcomes for the children and families serviced.

Under SB 784, Youth Services Bureaus would receive funding regardless of whether a local board has determined if it is in the best interest of the community for the program to be funded. While Youth Services Bureaus provide a specific service to jurisdictions in need, not all counties have them. In those counties, the CCIF funds are awarded to other local programs. Other counties without Youth Service Bureaus may find it beneficial to channel resources elsewhere. The decision-making flexibility to channel resources to meet local needs is crucial.

Local Management Boards are located in each county and Baltimore City and were established to identify local priorities and target resources to best address the needs of their communities. The boards serve as the primary coordinators, implementers, and monitors for children and family services in the local jurisdictions. Counties believes Local Management Boards should retain the funding and decision-making authority for programs such as Youth Service Bureaus. For these reasons, MACo urges an **UNFAVORABLE** report on SB 784.