October 30, 2026

The Honorable Governor Wes Moore
100 State Circle, Annapolis, MD 21401

Secretary Yaakov "Jake" Weissmann, Department of Budget and Management
45 Calvert St., Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Governor Moore and Secretary Weissmann,

As the federal government continues to cut funding to the social safety net, Maryland's renters need our support. By having to pay more for food and health care, renting families with children will have less money for rent and will be closer than ever to the knife's edge of homelessness.

The Community Schools Rental Assistance Program (CSRAP) stands in the gap. Your increased allocation of $12 million to CSRAP for FY 27 will help an estimated 9,700 children and parents in nearly 2,700 families avoid eviction and homelessness. As successful as this program was in its first year, we know that the demand for this lifeline is far greater. In just the three months that CSRAP was open in FY 26, DHCD received applications for over $31 million in assistance.

**With $20 million for CSRAP**:

- Nearly 16,0000 children and parents in 4,400 families avoid homelessness
- $47.8 million in savings to the State
- 70% of participants are Black mothers earning less than half of median income
- Expansion to additional counties
- Support small landlords by paying $4,500 in average rent debt

**For FY 28, we are asking you to allocate $20 million to CSRAP to help nearly 16,000 children and parents in 4,400 families avoid eviction and homelessness.**

These funds will also yield well-documented, long-term savings for Maryland. A Maryland study found that every dollar spent on eviction prevention funds yields $2.39 to the State. Eviction prevention funds reduce state-funded safety net expenses for sheltering and educating students as well as health care and foster care costs for persons who experience homelessness. Eviction prevention funds decrease incarceration rates and increase employment.

As rent, utilities, and other basic household costs continue to rise, more families than ever are only one hospital stay, a stolen car, or week of lost work away from eviction and homelessness. Maryland

families are particularly precarious. 21% of poverty in Maryland is driven by high housing costs. While homelessness declined nationwide, Maryland experienced a 17% increase in homelessness.

**CSRAP interrupts that cycle and ensures that a missed payment does not snowball into catastrophe.**



Shannon has worked at Sandalwood Elementary School in Baltimore County for 24 years, first as an educator and now as a community school facilitator. Rising rents and reduced benefits are placing students at greater risk of eviction than ever – directly affecting student performance and wellbeing.

In Shannon's experience, kids with high levels of transiency are often the most behind academically. They need additional support in the form of IEPs or 504s, yet often do not stay in one school long enough to implement these plans.

"*We need kids to stay in the same place to thrive academically, and housing instability is the number one reason they move so much. Most our families are one illness and loss of work hours away from eviction.*"

**CSRAP is the only source of dedicated, state-supported eviction prevention funds and a critical component of any comprehensive housing affordability strategy.** DHCD estimates that $20 million in FY 28 could allow CSRAP to expand from eight counties to 11 or 12.

CSRAP helps mitigate Maryland's history of discriminatory housing policies. In FY 26 70% of applicants were families headed by Black mothers making less than $59,000 annually, mirroring the fact that Black and brown Marylanders are more likely than others to be at risk of eviction.

Students cannot learn if they don't have a consistent place to sleep. Students facing eviction are six times more likely to be chronically absent and four times more likely to not complete high school. Students who experience housing insecurity are more likely to have a lower GPA as well as poor mental health outcomes. Further, fewer than 25% of children experiencing homelessness graduate from high school. CSRAP directly addresses this critical intersection of education and housing stability.

CSRAP is a successful, innovative collaboration among DHCD, the Department of Education, and advocates. We urge you to continue to support CSRAP and increase its funding to $20 million in FY 28.

Regards,

Advance Maryland
Anne Arundel County Comm. Action Agency, Inc.
Anne Arundel County Human Relations Comm.
Anne Arundel County Food Bank
Arrowhead Elementary School
Arundel House of Hope
Baltimore City Youth Action Board
Baltimore Regional Housing Partnership
Baltimore Renters United
Beacon Heights Elementary School
Beyond the Boundaries
CASH Campaign of MD
Center for Urban Families
Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility
Community Development Network of MD
Community Legal Services
Cooper Lane Elementary School
Cornerstone Franciscan Ministries
Disability Rights Maryland
DuVal High School
Ernest E. Just Middle School, Comm. School Coord.
Everyday Canvassing
Galena Elementary School
Green & Healthy Homes Initiative
Hollywood Elementary School
Hyattsville Middle School
International High School at Largo
Jews United for Justice
Maryland Assoc. of Local Management Boards
Maryland Center on Economic Policy
Maryland Family Network
Maryland Out of School Time Network
Meadowood Education Center
Mission of Love Charities
Nicholas Orem Middle School
Owings Mills High School
Parkdale High School
Port Towns Elementary School
Poverty Free Maryland
Pro Bono Resource Center
Progressive Maryland
Public Justice Center
Reisterstown Elementary School
Renters Alliance
Rolling Terrace Elementary School
Santoni, Vocci & Ortega, LLC
Shore Legal Access
Southeast Community Development Corp.
Strong Schools Maryland
Templeton Elementary School
The Fund for Change
The Green School of Baltimore
The Y in Central Maryland
The Zanvyl and Isabelle Krieger Fund
United Way of Central Maryland
We Are CASA

cc:
Lt. Governor Aruna Miller
Secretary Jake Day, Department of Housing and Community Development
Dr. Carey M. Wright, State Superintendent of Schools
Michael Huber, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor
Senator Bill Ferguson, Senate President
Delegate Joseline Peña-Melnyk, House Speaker
Senator Guy Guzzone, Chair, Senate Budget and Tax Committee
Delegate Ben Barnes, Chair, House Appropriations Committee