



THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401-1991

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES**

December 10, 2019

The Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr., Co-chair  
The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones, Co-chair  
Members of the Legislative Policy Committee

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Joint Committee on Children, Youth, and Families respectfully submits the following summary of its 2019 interim activities.

The joint committee met three times during the interim to consider a multitude of issues impacting children, youth, and families. Joint committee members were interested this year in learning about issues and programs that may be relevant throughout an individual's lifespan, and topics covered by presentations this interim ranged from healthy home visits for new parents through challenges faced by elderly individuals and those who care for them.

The joint committee's first meeting on September 4, 2019, focused on issues related to child care. The National Women's Law Center began the meeting by providing members with a national perspective on child care. Among other things, the presentation reviewed key elements of the federal Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014 and how states, including Maryland, have used the increased funding it provided to enhance child care programs. For example, Maryland has increased provider reimbursement rates and income eligibility levels, reduced parent copays, and created a new position to coordinate criminal background checks. The Maryland State Department of Education next provided an update of the Child Care Scholarship Program. The presentation included an overview of the program, including a review of program expenditures and the number of children and families served in fiscal 2019, as well as information on the most recent market rate survey that is used to set provider reimbursement rates. Representatives from the child care provider community also spoke to the committee about the importance of quality child care and offered insight into operating a child care business, including an overview of the myriad of requirements as set forth in regulation. Finally, the committee heard from representatives of four Local Management Boards, who described their holistic work coordinating local interagency service delivery systems for children, youth, and families. The representatives described some of the programs their local management boards have recently funded and the programs' outcomes benefiting children in Maryland.

The joint committee's meeting on October 16, 2019, was primarily devoted to issues regarding paid family and medical leave. The committee heard an overview of the findings issued in 2017 from the Task Force to Study Family and Medical Leave Insurance as well as information on related legislation that has been introduced since the final report of the task force was issued. A representative

December 10, 2019

Page 2

from MomsRising presented information on related federal legislation and policies in other states, including noting that eight states and the District of Columbia have passed comprehensive paid leave laws and that only 17% of workers have access to paid leave through their employers. The presentation also included statistics on the number of claims filed in some of the jurisdictions with family leave programs as well as information on the benefits of such programs. The joint committee next heard from a panel of presenters representing a broad spectrum of interests, such as employees, children and families, the aging and disabled communities, and small businesses, who all discussed with the committee the benefits that a paid family leave program would have from their perspectives. The October 16 meeting also included a brief presentation on home visiting programs in the State and the importance of these programs.

At the November 20, 2019 meeting, the joint committee heard presentations on long-term care policies and issues for families. Representatives from the Maryland Department of Health began the meeting by briefing the committee on Medical Assistance (Medicaid) long-term care programs and waivers that improve access to services. The joint committee then heard from the National Academy for State Health Policy on other states' approaches to supporting family caregiving by sharing information, assessing family caregivers' needs, offering caregiver training, and improving financing for caregivers' supports. The committee also heard public testimony from two disability rights advocates who described the challenges that they have faced navigating long-term care for individuals with complex medical needs transitioning to adult services. The Maryland Department of Aging and AARP Maryland presented as a panel on caregiving for aging adults including recent policy changes, available programs and innovations, and the increasing need for services. A panel of representatives from The Coordinating Center and a staff member for the Maryland Commission on Caregiving shared systemwide resources and care coordination efforts for families and medically complex individuals. To conclude the meeting, the committee heard from a panel of stakeholders who described critical staffing and personnel issues facing caregivers for aging adults, medically complex individuals, and families. The committee recognizes that long-term care and family caregiving greatly affects families across the State and looks forward to exploring these issues further during the 2020 interim.

The Joint Committee on Children, Youth, and Families wishes to thank those individuals who contributed their time and expertise during the 2019 interim to inform and advise the committee's work.

Sincerely,

  
Mary L. Washington  
Senate Chair

  
Ariana B. Kelly  
House Chair

MLW:ABK/JKB:APW/km

cc: Members, Joint Committee on Children, Youth, and Families  
Ms. Victoria L. Gruber  
Mr. Ryan Bishop  
Ms. Alexandra Hughes  
Mr. Jake Weissmann