

July 21, 2025

Legislative Director
Fairfax County Government
12000 Government Center Parkway
Fairfax, VA 22035

The Advisory Social Services Board (ASSB) thanks you for the consideration of the following priorities in the 2026 Fairfax County Human Services Legislative Agenda. The Fairfax County Department of Family Services (DFS) is a leading provider of services and administrator of programs for our county's vulnerable populations. DFS manages the eligibility of recipients of Federal funds for programs like Medicaid, SNAP, and TANF, in compliance with Federal law. The recent passage of HR1 will have a direct impact on the health and welfare of County residents, as well as on the capacity of DFS to deliver services.

The impact of HR1 will be felt by families that find themselves no longer eligible for benefits on which they had previously relied, based on the addition of criteria related to the ages of their dependent children, employment, previously protected immigration status, and other factors that have no practical applicability to their need for assistance. Virginia, Fairfax County, and DFS will be impacted as well, variously by changes in cost sharing, the increase in administrative costs of applying additional conditions on benefits enrollment, and the staff required to handle this additional workload. Additionally, this situation will also likely result in additional resource demands and strain on other services such as public safety and emergency medical providers, and the inability to close service gaps by non-profit organizations which are also subject to new funding constraints. We urge the Board of Supervisors to champion policy and action that increase support for residents that require assistance. Additionally, the Board should pursue and support actions that reduce the administrative costs incurred by DFS and borne by the County and State, through changes in policy or process. One such action should be the modernization of tools used for Medicaid and SNAP program administration, with the goal of automating eligibility determinations to reduce cost and error rates.

With respect to positions that the county has supported during previous sessions of the General Assembly, the ASSB would like to highlight and reaffirm support for the following:

- **Children's Services Act (CSA)** Support continued state responsibility for funding mandated CSA services on a sum sufficient basis. Oppose changes to CSA that shift costs to local governments, disrupt the responsibilities and authorities assigned to the County by CSA, or alter current funding formulas and increase costs to Fairfax County (where the aggregate local match is currently about 46 percent). Also support the current structure, which requires that service decisions are made at the local level and are based on the needs of each child, ensuring that service expenditures are approved through local processes.
- **Domestic and Sexual Violence** Support additional state funding and efforts to increase the capacity for localities to implement culturally specific prevention and intervention services to eliminate domestic and sexual violence, including continued support for evidence-based, quality programs that provide education and rehabilitation for those who cause harm to help end the cycle of violence and provide victims more choice in addressing safety concerns and housing needs. Also support legislation to strengthen protective orders (POs), such as requiring

family abuse PO respondents to immediately surrender firearms directly to law enforcement; expanding the prohibition on knowingly possessing a firearm to include non-family abuse PO respondents; and providing judges with greater discretion to extend and/or increase the time period of POs.

- **Medicaid Waivers** Support state funding and expansion for Virginia's Medicaid Waivers that provide critical home and community-based services for qualified individuals. Also support increased funding for Developmental Disability (DD) Medicaid waiver rates and slots, to provide appropriate community services and ensure the Commonwealth fulfills its responsibility to implement the federal settlement agreement.
- **Adult Protective Services (APS)** Support state funding for additional APS social workers. As the older adult population has increased in Virginia, so has the demand for APS services, but state funding has remained stagnant (in FY 2024, Fairfax County APS received over 3,700 reports of adult abuse, neglect, and exploitation).
- **Independence and Self-Sufficiency for Older Adults and People with Disabilities** Support funding for programs that promote the independence, self-sufficiency, and community engagement of older adults and people with disabilities. Also support additional funding for home care workers and resources for family caregivers.
- **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)** Support a continued increase in TANF reimbursement rates, as current Virginia TANF benefit levels remain at or below 32 percent of the Federal Poverty Level for all family household sizes. Also support continued TANF funding of programs which meet the needs of low-income families.
- **Child Care** Support increased state childcare funding for economically disadvantaged families not participating in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)/Virginia Initiative for Education and Work (VIEW) and support an increase in childcare service rates. Also support maintaining Fairfax County's local permitting process for family childcare providers serving four or fewer non-resident children.

Thank you for your work in pursuing policy in the interest of the welfare of our county's residents.

Regards,

Julian De Phillips, Chair

On behalf of the Fairfax County Advisory Social Services Board