



CB 21-0004: Office to End Homelessness - Establishment, Administration, and Permanent Housing  
Voucher Program  
February 23, 2021  
Housing and Urban Affairs Committee of the Baltimore City Council  
SUPPORT

Chairwoman Middleton, Vice-Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to support Council Bill 21-0004. This bill creates a permanent Office to End Homelessness in City Government, and creates a Local Voucher Program to be administered by this Office with funding from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

The CASH Campaign of Maryland promotes economic advancement for low-to-moderate income individuals and families in Baltimore and across Maryland. CASH accomplishes its mission through operating a portfolio of direct service programs, building organizational and field capacity, and leading policy and advocacy initiatives to strengthen family economic stability. CASH and its partners across the state achieve this by providing free tax preparation services through the IRS program 'VITA', offering free financial education and coaching, and engaging in policy research and advocacy.

Homelessness is one of many barriers preventing families from economic advancement. The exact number of people in Baltimore City experiencing homelessness is unclear. However, according to the Baltimore City 2020 Point-in-Time Count Report about **2,193 people experience homelessness in Baltimore City on a given night**. 52% of the people accounted for were seeking emergency shelter, 14% were unsheltered, and 34% were in transitional housing.<sup>[1]</sup> The Journey Home identified the fundamental causes of homelessness in Baltimore City: poverty, a lack of affordable housing, and a lack of comprehensive health and supportive services.<sup>[2]</sup> **Research shows this bill will expand affordable housing to about 100 low-income families transitioning out of homelessness a year.**

Council Bill 21-0004 is a step in the right direction towards ensuring homelessness in Baltimore City is rare, brief, and non-recurring. Therefore, we encourage a favorable report of Council Bill 21-0004. Thank you.

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<sup>[1]</sup> Mayor's Office of Homeless Services. (January 2020). Baltimore City Continuum of Care Point-in-Time (PIT) Count Report.

<sup>[2]</sup> The Journey Home. (2020). About Homelessness-The Facts