



# Hearing: Bill 25-0100

**December 18, 2025**

## **OPENING & PURPOSE**

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# **Protecting the Promise of Baltimore's Children & Youth Fund**

Alysia Lee, President & CEO





# WHAT BCYF WAS CREATED TO DO

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## BCYF's Purpose

- Center community voice
- Advance equity
- Invest in youth-serving organizations
- Strengthen the youth-development ecosystem





# ABOUT BCYF

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**Advancing equity and opportunity through community-rooted grantmaking.**

Established by Baltimore voters.  
Independent public fund.

**Mission:**

Support youth development organizations and leaders.

**Vision:**

A just, abundant, and creative Baltimore.





## OUR PROGRESS & SUCCESSES

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**\$40M+**

invested in youth-serving  
organizations

**460+**

hours of professional learning  
and technical assistance

**17,000+**

youth seats supported citywide

**100+**

grantee partners across  
Baltimore neighborhoods

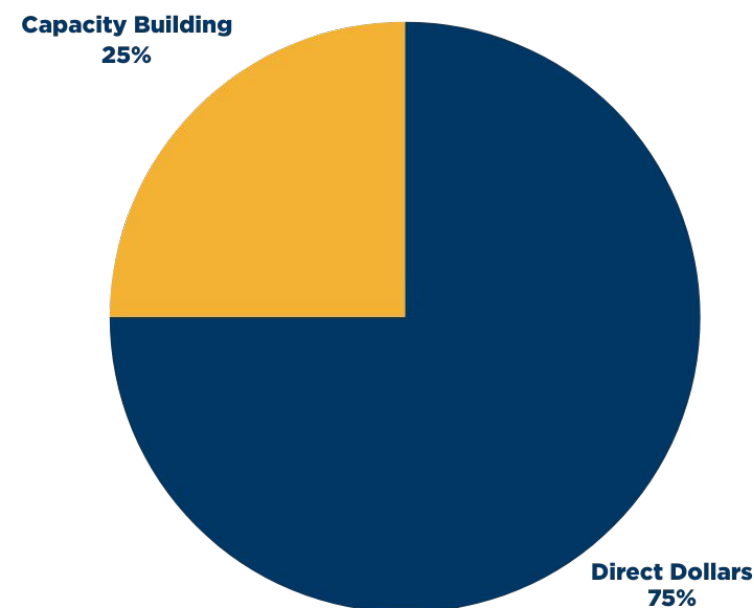
**94% grantees in compliance**

# BCYF's DUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY

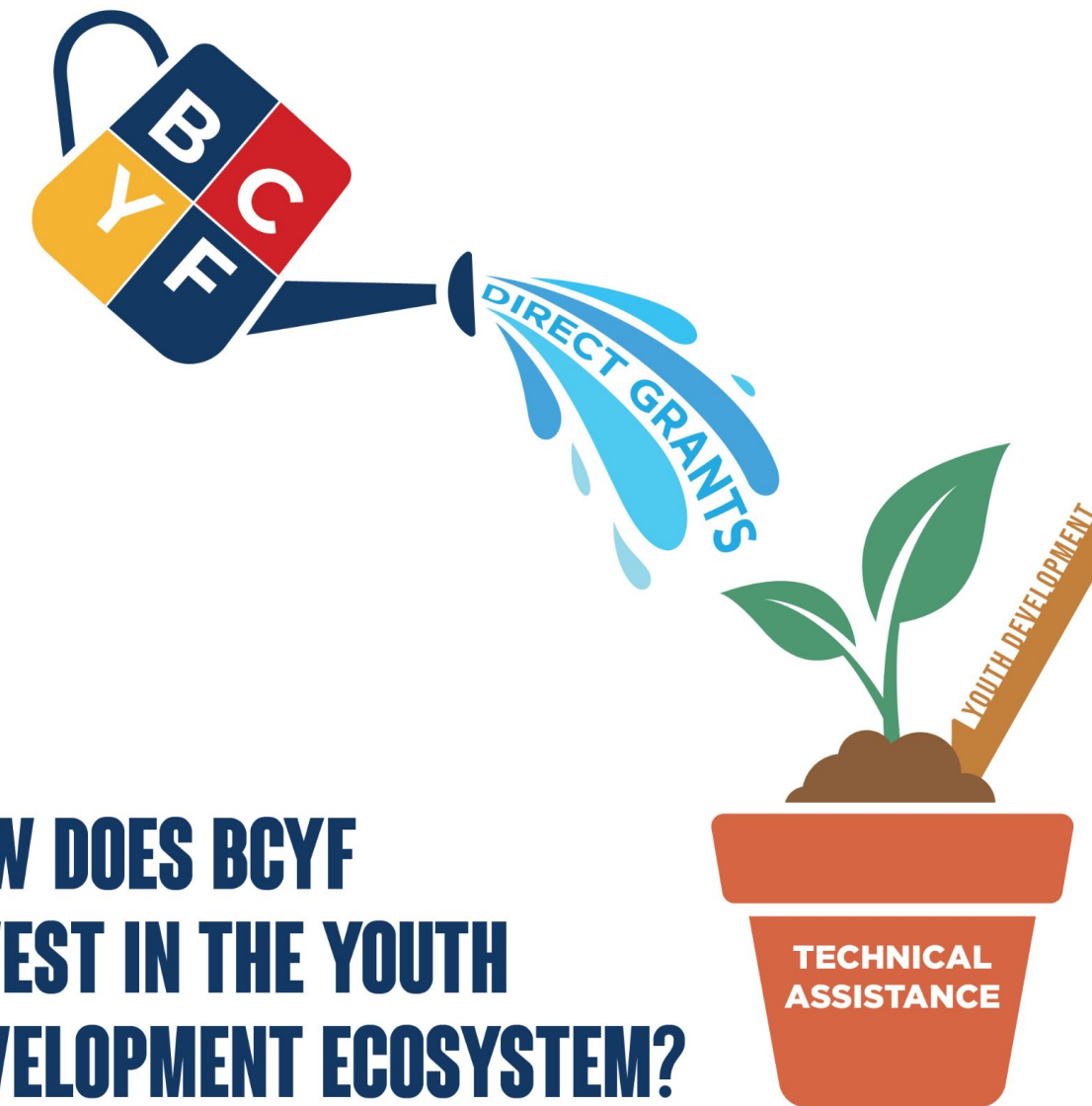
## Programs + People

- Direct Grants
- Technical Assistance & Capacity Building = the learning lab

Strengthen programs and the people who power them.



HOW DOES BCYF  
INVEST IN THE YOUTH  
DEVELOPMENT ECOSYSTEM?



# BCYF OVERSIGHT & ACCOUNTABILITY

## BCYF is already accountable through:

- City-BCYF MOU Annual independent audit
- IRS nonprofit reporting
- Risk-based financial monitoring for grantees
- Post-award site visits
- Annual budget public hearing
- City government financial and annual reports
- Annual City Council Hearing
- Provision for Performance Audit



## **MYTH VS. FACT**

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**MYTH: BCYF is not audited**

**FACT: BCYF undergoes annual independent audits**

**MYTH: BCYF lacks transparency**

**FACT: BCYF publishes reports & holds public meetings**

**MYTH: BCYF funds unvetted organizations**

**FACT: BCYF uses multi-stage review & risk screening**



# WHY WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THIS BILL

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## Strong Intent, Concerning Impacts

Misalignment creates:

- Operational strain
- Legal conflict
- Reduced equity





# STRUCTURAL MISALIGNMENT

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## The Bill Was Developed Too Far from Current Practice

Conflicts with:

- MOU with the City
- Nonprofit standards
- Grassroots Grantmaking
- Youth ecosystem realities





# GRANTMAKING PROCESSES DO NOT BELONG IN STATUTE

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**Statutory process requirements =  
Rigidity & reduced equity**

Equity requires flexibility and continuous improvement.

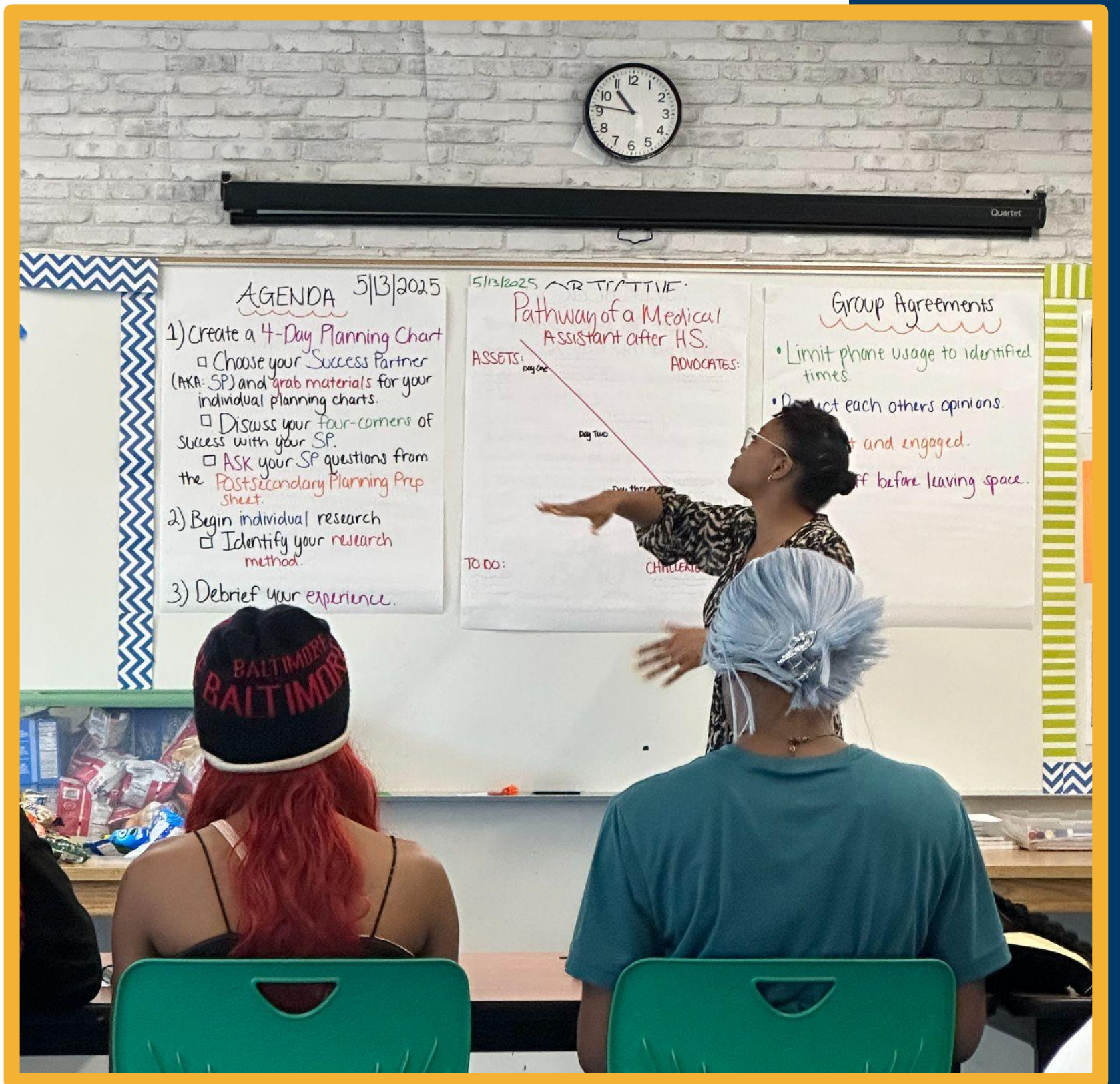




# FISCAL SPONSORSHIP & EQUITY

## Essential pathway for grassroots organizations

Bill unintentionally restricts access  
for emerging and  
community-rooted groups.





# REPORTING & ACCOUNTABILITY

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- Support strong reporting
- Oppose rigid, one-size-fits-all mandates
- Align reporting requirements with the MOU





# COMMUNITY VOICE

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**“BCYF didn’t just fund us — they taught us how to sustain our work.”**

— Youth-serving organization leader





# REQUESTED AMENDMENTS

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## BCYF requests amendments to:

- Remove grantmaking processes from statute
- Remove prior-year expenditure caps
- Adjust COI restrictions
- Preserve fiscal sponsorship
- Avoid Board expansion without support
- Align reporting with MOU
- Remove vague demographic language





# IF THE BILL PASSES AS WRITTEN

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## Predicted impacts:

- Delayed grant cycles
- Fewer eligible organizations
- Legal conflicts
- Loss of flexibility
- Erosion of trust
- Fewer youth served





# WHAT WE ARE NOT ASKING FOR

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**Not less oversight —  
better alignment**

Strengthen accountability  
while protecting  
community-rooted equity.



# OUR CALL TO ACTION

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**Before advancing the bill, BCYF requests:**

- Two community working sessions
- One Board working session
- Direct collaboration with bill's author





# WHY THIS MATTERS

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**Legislation must strengthen — not constrain — Baltimore's youth ecosystem**

Decisions determine:

- Which programs survive
- Which youth get opportunities
- Whether equity advances or retreats





# CLOSING: ACCOUNTABILITY + EXTRAORDINARY IMPACT

A just, abundant, and creative Baltimore.

BCYF is delivering exceptional results for  
Baltimore's youth.

Let's strengthen this legislation — together.







# THANK YOU

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BALTIMORE CHILDREN & YOUTH FUND



**What we are NOT  
asking for**

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**Not less oversight**

**BETTER  
ALIGNMENT**

