

# Baltimore

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To: President and Members of the City Council  
c/o 409 City Hall

From: Jane Plapinger  
President & CEO

Date: May 22, 2008

Re: Support for City Council Bill 08-0046R

Baltimore Mental Health Systems, Inc. supports City Council Bill 08-0046R. This bill addresses an important step in ensuring that Baltimore City's children enjoy a safe and secure childhood. This Bill will create a taskforce of concerned and informed community leaders who will focus on two areas:

- Educating the public on the effects of abuse, neglect, and sexual exploitation and the role of adults to prevent such acts, and
- Reviewing and evaluating Baltimore City's responses to cases of abuse, neglect, and sexual exploitation.

Currently, Baltimore Mental Health Systems, Inc. provides oversight of the Public Mental Health System in Baltimore City which includes support to agencies responding to incidents of childhood trauma including cases of child abuse and neglect, community violence, and sexual exploitation. In addition, Baltimore Mental Health Systems, Inc. collaborates with other child serving agencies to ensure that the mental health needs of children are addressed within these systems. Baltimore Mental Health Systems, Inc. has also supported and sponsored professional development opportunities on the effects of childhood trauma and providing trauma informed mental health services.

Baltimore Mental Health Systems, Inc. believes that these efforts to strengthen prevention, detection and response to incidents of abuse, neglect and exploitation will improve the safety and emotional health of Baltimore City's children.

