



# IN REACH, INC.

*Preparing Students for College, Work and Life*

## **Testimony in support of Senate Bill 691: Maryland After-School and Summer Opportunity Fund (MASOF) Program – Funding Requirement**

Before the Committee on Education, Health and Environmental Affairs

March 4, 2015

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Good afternoon my name is Katrina Robinson and I am representing **IN REACH, INC.**, a nonprofit organization located in Prince George's County that prepares students for college, work and life. Thank you Senator Benson and members of the Committee for the opportunity to testify today on this important topic.

**IN REACH** supports the 2014 comprehensive plan and recommendations of the Maryland After-School and Summer Opportunity Fund specifically as they relate to the availability of consistent and reliable funding to reach the scale and scope of need and demand for quality out of school programs including funds for transportation; the emphasis on innovative programs that incorporate new research and best practices and education and youth development, utilize technology and leverage partnerships; and promotes a framework for supporting effective strategies for family involvement in children's learning.

Founded in 1999, **IN REACH** has been providing afterschool programming to Prince George's county students for over twelve years. Last year, **IN REACH** served 508 students and parents through four programs and five community events. Our programs span from elementary to high school, are usually school-based and include summer opportunities. Although we serve all students, our primary target audience consists of students attending Title 1 and high poverty schools.

Poverty is the number one challenge to our mission of preparing students for college, work and life and so many of our students and their families are affected by it. We see its affects when we work with a student who cannot read proficiently, who may be homeless, receive inadequate health care, is food insecure, and/or lacks self-confidence. This is why it is critical that more funding is made available to organizations like **IN REACH**.

In 2012, 80 percent of Prince George's County nonprofits with a 501(c)3 designation had budgets under \$25,000. PTAs, sports leagues, neighborhood associations and other worthwhile groups fall into this category – and even the tiniest nonprofit can help strengthen the fabric of the community. The County has many more small nonprofits than the state of Maryland, where 66 percent of 501(c)3 groups have budgets under \$25,000. *(Source: Maryland Association of Nonprofit Organizations analysis of 2012 IRS data)*

Funding through SB691 will specifically help the various types of nonprofits in Prince George's County become more sustainable reaching more children and youth in need of precious afterschool and out of school programming. **IN REACH** supports the Maryland After-School and Summer Opportunity Fund beginning in FY2017 using the education trust fund as a source of funding for afterschool, summer and out-of-school time programs and ask that you do too.

On behalf of every student we represent today and will represent in the future, thank you for the opportunity to speak on this essential need this afternoon.