





October 20, 2025

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

TO: Colette R. Gresham, Esq.
Acting Council Administrator

Karen Zavakos, Esq.
Acting Associate Council Administrator

THRU: Lavinia Baxter 
Senior Legislative Budget and Policy Analyst

FROM: David Noto 
Legislative Budget and Policy Analyst

RE: Policy Analysis and Fiscal Impact Statement
CR-126-2025 – Supporting Foster Care Youth

CR-126-2025 (*Proposed by:* Council Chair Burroughs)

Assigned to the Committee of the Whole (COW)

A RESOLUTION CONCERNING SUPPORTING FOSTER CARE YOUTH for the purpose of establishing a Foster Care Task Force that will develop strategies that increase the social safety net, improve outcomes for foster youth, examine current County processes, recommend policy, and operational and budget actions within the Department of Social Services and other County agencies.

Fiscal Summary

Direct Impact

Expenditures: None.

Revenues: None.

Indirect Impact

Likely favorable

Legislative Summary:

CR-126-2025, introduced by Chair Burroughs, and cosponsored by Council members Watson, Olson, Harrison, Harrison, Adames-Stafford, Hawkins, Oriadha, Fisher and Dernoga would establish a Foster Care Task Force to strengthen support for foster youth and their families.¹ Every year, hundreds of children continue to go in and out of the foster care and judicial system. This task force will examine policies and resource allocation to improve the outcomes of foster care youth and their families, who will be better supported by the County to be fully included in the County's social, cultural, and economic life.

Current Law/Background:

State Law:

In September of 2025, an audit of the Maryland Department of Human Services from 2020 through 2024 found systemic failures within the state's Social Services Administration when it came to protection of foster children, such as allowing foster children to live in guardianship homes with registered sex offenders, letting foster children miss critical medical care, and placing foster children in hotels under unlicensed supervision.²³ Many of these issues have been known since audits dating back to 2008 but have still not been resolved. Also in September of 2025, a 16-year-old County resident, Kanaiyah Ward, died by suicide at a Baltimore hotel, where she was being housed while a ward of the state, due to severe mental health issues.⁴ Delegate Mike Griffith, a former foster child himself, is currently working on the "Never Again Act of 2026 - Kanaiyah's Law", which would prohibit placing foster children in hotels for more than a week without review and authorization from the Secretary of the Department of Human Services.⁵

Resource Personnel:

- Ramon Gonzalez, Legislative Attorney
- Pleshette Monro, Director of Operations, Council Chair Burroughs' Office

¹ [Prince George's County Council - Reference No. CR-126-2025](#)

² [Home | Office of Legislative Audits](#)

³ [Maryland Social Services failures let some foster children live with sex offenders, audit finds](#)

⁴ [Family questions DHS care after teen's tragic death in Baltimore hotel ruled a suicide](#)

⁵ [Delegate proposes foster care reforms after teen's death](#)

- Preston Ross, Chief of Staff, Council Chair Burroughs' Office
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Discussion/Policy Analysis:

CR-126-2025 would establish a task force that would examine County practices to improve outcomes for foster youth, with special regard for those impacted by the criminal justice system and for parents or guardians of foster youth impacted by the criminal justice system.

The Children's Bureau at the United States Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families, reported that there were approximately 407,000 children in foster care in 2020.⁶ Studies have found that a significant number of foster youths will have an encounter with the criminal justice system.⁷ Another study found that if a foster child is moved more than five (5) times, there is a more than 90% chance that child will end up involved in the juvenile justice system.⁸ A study of over 10,000 foster youth in Wisconsin found that almost 13% of the sample experienced imprisonment in young adulthood.⁹ The study found that foster children who have been reunified are almost twice as likely to be imprisoned, compared to emancipated foster children. Additionally, reunified Black youth are twice as likely to be imprisoned as reunified white youth.¹⁰ As such, some advocates have dubbed the connection between foster care and imprisonment the foster-care to prison pipeline.¹¹

Fiscal Impact:

- *Direct Impact*

Adoption of CR-126-2025 is not likely to have any direct fiscal impact beyond the entitled reimbursements for expenses for workgroup members under the Standard State Travel Regulations, as provided by the County Budget.

- *Indirect Impact*

Adoption of CR-126-2025 is not likely to have any indirect fiscal impact.

Effective Date of Proposed Legislation:

The proposed Resolution shall be effective upon its adoption.

⁶ [National Data Shows Number of Children in Foster Care Decreases for the Third Consecutive Year | The Administration for Children and Families](#)

⁷ [Midwest Study](#)

⁸ [Child Welfare and the Criminal System: Impact, Overlap, Potential Solutions | Georgetown Journal on Poverty Law & Policy | Georgetown Law](#)

⁹ [Foster care, permanency, and risk of prison entry](#)

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ [The foster care-to-prison pipeline: A road to incarceration](#)

If you require additional information, or have questions about this fiscal impact statement, please reach out to me via phone or email.