

## Executive Summary

### **Background**

Philanthropy is affected by public policies that relate directly to charitable giving and the nonprofit sector, as well as those relating to specific social issues its members seek to address. Maryland Philanthropy Network (MPN) advocates on behalf of philanthropy for an environment in which charitable giving can thrive and realize its maximum impact on community life. The Board of Directors of MPN has established advocacy priorities as identified by its membership and Public Policy Committee of the MPN Board of Directors.

### **2020 Priorities**

These priorities are organized by the following categories: 2020 Public Policy Priorities, Systems Change Monitoring Areas, 2020 Affinity Group Monitoring Areas, and 2020 Initiative Public Policy Priorities.

#### ***2020 Public Policy Priorities***

Topics under this category are legislative, regulative, or administrative areas that have impacts across all our affinity group issue areas.

- ***The 2020 Census***

The next U.S. census will begin on April 1, 2020. The role of philanthropy is critical in maintaining that the census is above politics and that a complete count supports the creation of conditions where communities can thrive.

- ***The Kirwan Commission Recommendations***

The Kirwan Commission recommendations include investments in: early childhood education, high-quality teachers and leaders, college and career readiness pathways, resources for underserved students, and governance and accountability. MPN will partner with others to advocate for the creation of a world-class education system for every student regardless of race, poverty, language, and ability.

- ***Tax Law and Charitable Giving***

The 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) resulted in many undesired impacts on the social sector. The most notable changes are in charitable deduction, business income tax, and the creation of the opportunity zones. In support of our members at large, MPN advocates on behalf of philanthropy for an environment in which charitable giving can thrive and realize its maximum impact on community life.

For these topics, our association will conduct advocacy by:

- Educating our members through programming;
- Engaging, elevating, and supporting the work of advocates working on the policy areas;
- Communication strategies including written op-eds, press releases, and informational newsletters;
- Convening discussions with elected officials, public agency heads, and our members;
- Participating as a representative of the association on relevant state commissions, task forces, or committees.

### ***Systems Change Monitoring Areas***

Topics under this category are considered underlying causes of systemic social issues. Due to the long-term nature, and complexity, of addressing these topics, our association will monitor and inform our members on developments being made and respond to emerging advocacy actions.

- ***Childhood Adversity and Trauma Responsiveness***  
Mitigating and remediating the harmful impacts of adverse childhood experiences by using a trauma-informed lens on policies and practices while creating conditions for people to thrive.
- ***Racial Equity and Reconciliation***  
Applying an anti-racism frame on policies and practices through the public acknowledgement of a history of violence rooted in racism, an evaluation of present-day occurrences of racism-informed systems, and collective healing and transformation.
- ***Social Determinants of Health and Economic Mobility***  
Addressing social determinants of health, such as food, housing, transportation, employment, and education access, security, and affordability as cross-cutting issues affecting health and economic outcomes for children and families across Maryland communities.

### ***2020 Affinity Group Monitoring Areas***

Topics under this category are the respective public policy issues identified by the Arts Funders, Health Funders, Affinity Group on Aging, Community Investment Funders, Education Funders, and Green Funders affinity groups. MPN will monitor and inform our members on developments and emerging advocacy actions.

### ***2020 Initiative Public Policy Priorities***

Topics under this category are the public policy priorities of the Baltimore Workforce Collaborative, the Baltimore Integration Partnership, the School-Centered Neighborhood Investment Initiative, and the Funders together to End Homelessness Baltimore – MPN initiatives and collaborations that by design advocate for systems change via collaboration across sectors.

## Overview

Maryland Philanthropy Network's (MPN) strategic framework charges it to lead, with and for its members, efforts to influence critical issues and improve community conditions. MPN's role and actions can take many forms, most often seeking to leverage the resources and expertise of its membership to work directly with government and policy decision makers to increase collective impact. MPN connects its members and broader network to policymakers and acts as a collective voice on local, state, and federal policy issues that promote effective philanthropy and build stronger communities.

- ***Promoting Philanthropy***  
MPN advocates for public policies that increase charitable giving and volunteerism, such as tax incentives for charitable giving, or that prevent excessive regulation of philanthropic and nonprofit organizations that could impede the sector's ability to carry out charitable activities. MPN frequently partners with other philanthropic associations, coalitions and advocacy groups to make public statements, meet with elected officials, and engage in other activities to inform public discourse on the importance of a thriving social sector.
- ***Building Stronger Communities***  
Building strong communities requires engagement with the public sector in ways that increase opportunities for partnership, leverage public-private resources, foster effective civic leadership and shed light on complex issues and the potential to bring promising solutions to scale. MPN cultivates opportunities for members to engage with policymakers as well as deepen their understanding of foundation advocacy regulations and best practices.
- ***MPN Affinity Groups, Initiatives and Collaboratives***  
The Association Public Policy Committee and Staff support the work and interests of its membership through the neutral convening of partners to understand and define opportunities for advocacy that will support and advance the goals of its members, member affinity groups and fiscally sponsored initiatives.

Each year, the Public Policy Committee of the Network's Board of Directors convenes and connects across funder affinity groups, fiscally hosted initiatives, funder collaborations and individual members to understand the landscape of member policy interests and distill those interests and issues into an agenda. This forecast is presented to the MPN Board of Directors each year with any intended public agenda presented for approval. This agenda outlines for the Board and Membership how the Network and its staff are likely to focus policy effort and action in the new calendar year.

Through these articulated priorities generated by the work of our membership, and in public response to issues arising and affecting Maryland communities, the Network will stand for its core values as a philanthropic membership organization, seek to build stronger communities across Maryland, leverage the resources of private philanthropy for greater impact, and promote giving and the philanthropic sector as a whole. Priorities are organized by the following categories:

- ***2020 Public Policy Priorities***  
Topics under this category are legislative, regulative, or administrative areas that have impacts across all our affinity group issue areas. For these topics, our association will conduct advocacy by:

- Educating our members through programming;
  - Engaging, elevating, and supporting the work of advocates working on the policy areas;
  - Communication strategies including written op-eds, press releases, and informational newsletters;
  - Convening discussions with elected officials, public agency heads, and our members;
  - Participating as a representative of the association on relevant state commissions, task forces, or committees.
- ***Systems Change Monitoring Areas***  
Topics under this category are considered underlying causes of systemic social issues. Due to the long-term nature, and complexity, of address these topics, our association will monitor and inform our members on developments being made and respond to emerging advocacy actions.
  - ***2020 Affinity Group Monitoring Areas***  
Topics under this category are the respective public policy issues identified by the Arts Funders, Health Funders, Affinity Group on Aging, Community Investment Funders, Education Funders, and Green Funders affinity groups. MPN will monitor and inform our members on developments and emerging advocacy actions.
  - ***2020 MPN Initiatives Public Policy Priorities***  
Topics under this category are the public policy priorities of the Baltimore Workforce Collaborative, the Baltimore Integration Partnership, the School Centered Neighborhood Initiative, and the Funders together to End Homelessness Baltimore – MPN initiatives and collaborations that by design advocate for systems change via collaboration across sectors.

## 2020 Public Policy Priorities

### The 2020 CENSUS

- **Summary:** The next U.S. census will begin on April 1, 2020. Every ten years, the census aims to count every resident in the United States and capture critical population data. This data is used to determine how political representation is apportioned, the way state and federal dollars are distributed, and other matters. Getting a complete census count is crucial. In Maryland, every person not counted equates to \$1,821 in lost federal funding every year, or \$18,210 per uncounted person over ten years. This census faces unique challenges for attaining a complete count including, a shift in the reporting process, competing with national and local primary elections, and for the first time since 1950, there was an attempt to add a question regarding U.S. Citizenship status. The role of philanthropy is critical in maintaining that the census is above politics and that a complete count supports the creation of conditions where communities can thrive.
- **Local Advocacy Actions:** Participate on Baltimore City’s Complete Count Committee, lead their subgrants subcommittee, and act as a grant passthrough to support nonprofit organizations. Participate in Frederick County’s Complete Count Committee. Support local community based organizations acquire State Census Outreach grant in Howard County.
- **State Advocacy Actions:** Activate Maryland Community Foundations in supporting census outreach strategies, and support collaborative strategies for census outreach across MPN membership.

- **Federal Advocacy Actions:** Monitor announcement, guidelines, and the “citizenship question”, from the U.S. Census Bureau to provide the Maryland community with resources and accurate information.

### The Kirwan Commission Recommendations

- **Summary:** Maryland’s 2019 legislative session took steps to advance the recommendations developed by the Maryland Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education (“Kirwan Commission”), despite the decision to delay full implementation of the recommendations. The Education Blueprint for Maryland’s Future (House Bill 1413 / Senate Bill 1030) passed, establishing principles to transform public education. There are still ways to go and the advocacy will continue in the coming years. The Kirwan Commission recommendations include investments in: early childhood education, high-quality teachers and leaders, college and career readiness pathways, resources for underserved students, and governance and accountability. MPN will partner with Strong Schools Maryland and others to advocate for the shared belief that we can create a world-class education system for every student, especially those who are disproportionately affected by policies because of race, poverty, language and disability.
- **Local Advocacy Actions:** Aligning advocacy messaging our colleagues and donors of the Baltimore Community Foundation, and other local stakeholders, to advocate broad community support for the Commission’s recommendations.
- **State Advocacy Actions:**
  - Elevate and align advocacy messaging of education advocates with MPN education funders
  - Outreach to our donor communities across the state to provide briefings in partnership with MPN education funders and community foundation members
- **Federal Advocacy Actions:** None identified at this time.

### Tax Law and Charitable Giving

- **Summary:** The 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) resulted in many undesired impacts on the social sector. The most notable changes are in charitable deduction, business income tax, and the creation of the opportunity zones. By increasing the standard deduction, the number of taxpayers who itemize significantly reduced. This consequently reduced the number of taxpayers who access charitable deduction, and in turn reduced an incentive for charitable giving. As well, the TCJA created new criteria for unrelated business income taxes, which negatively impacted the bottom-lines of many nonprofit organization. TCJA also created opportunity zone program, with minimal guidelines, the totally results of which remain unknown. In support of our members at large, MPN advocates on behalf of philanthropy for an environment in which charitable giving can thrive and realize its maximum impact on community life.
- **Local Advocacy Actions:** Support the coordination of Opportunity zone investments by collaborating with the Baltimore Development Corporation on outreach initiatives and inform MPN corporate funders on new developments and opportunities.
- **State Advocacy Actions:**

- Work with Maryland Nonprofits to engage nonprofit leaders in conversations about planning for unrelated business taxes.
- Advocate for continuation of the **Endow Maryland tax credit** program providing incentives for donors to give locally through community foundations.
- **Federal Advocacy Actions:**
  - Advocate for protection and expansion of existing federal, state and local tax credits received in return for charitable contributions, and advocate for the repeal of the unrelated business income tax provision in the tax code
  - Monitor and oppose any proposals to repeal the Johnson Amendment, which is the provision in the U.S. tax code that prohibits all 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations from endorsing or opposing political candidates.

### Systems Change Monitoring Areas

#### Childhood Adversity and Trauma Responsiveness

- **Summary:** [The 1998 Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACEs\)](#) study revealed the relationship between childhood adversity and negative health outcomes later in life. This study catalyzed efforts to prevent and treat the effects of ACEs through trauma-informed policy strategies. In April 2019, the United States Government Accountability Office was commissioned to review childhood trauma strategies across the country and [reported](#) the significance of trauma on public health and state spending. In Maryland, Congressman Elijah Cummings and the Baltimore City Council continue to champion trauma-informed policies, but face resource constraints that act as barriers to their legislative action. Philanthropy can support ameliorating this widespread issue, and the comprehensive public policy initiative that will have to be made across sectors, through resourcing and partnership.
- **Local Advocacy Actions:** Connect Baltimore City Council to the MPN membership to foster partnerships and collaboration.
- **State Advocacy Actions:** Engage state agencies in conversations and strategies to support trauma-informed policies.
- **Federal Advocacy Actions:** Understand priorities of congressional representatives to support the resourcing of their agendas.

#### Racial Equity and Reconciliation

- **Summary:** Maryland has a highly educated workforce, the highest median income in the country, and more millionaires per capita than any other state. However, a legacy of discrimination has resulted in significant and persistent racial and ethnic economic inequity. Households of color in Maryland are more than twice as likely as white households to lack the liquid assets to live above the poverty level for three months if they suddenly lose their income. As well, white households have an average net worth that is almost eight times higher than that of households of color. Public policy shaping can support the undoing of these various inequities.

During Maryland's 2018 legislative session, legislation forming a state-wide equity and reconciliation taskforce was created to "foster reconciliation and inclusionary justice and work toward achieving

racial equity”. This taskforce will develop recommendations and monitoring the implementation of those recommendations. In 2018, the Baltimore City Council passed legislation to eliminate structural and institutional racism within city agencies through public policy changes.

▪ **Local Advocacy Actions:**

- Support Baltimore City government in shaping strategies to evaluate sources of inequities and address them. Celeste and Elisabeth has met with Carolyn Mozelle (deputy chief)
- Support and elevate the work of Open Society Institute’s Blueprint for Baltimore initiative

▪ **State Advocacy Actions:** Support and monitor the work of the Equity and Reconciliation Taskforce

▪ **Federal Advocacy Actions:** Monitor the national discourse and congressional hearings regarding reparations for U.S. descendants of enslaved Africans.

### Social Determinants of Health and Economic Mobility

**Summary:** Each MPN affinity group and many members individually, have identified food, housing, transportation, employment, and education access, security, and affordability as cross-cutting issues affecting health and economic outcomes for children and families across Maryland communities. It is critical for philanthropy to recognize the influence of social determinates on health outcomes, and develop funding strategies that reflect the intersections of these issues.

▪ **Local Advocacy Actions:**

- Engage, inform and support local efforts that advance to affordable and secure housing in various Maryland counties
- Recognize local occurrences of food apartheid and identify opportunities for MPN members to promote food sovereignty and security

▪ **State Advocacy Actions:**

- Support the work of workforce advocates and actions to reduce the impact of incarceration on workers
- Support the advancement of transportation equity in Maryland by monitoring state-level transportation advocacy initiatives including: regional transportation authority strategies, the Maryland Transportation and Climate Initiative implementation, and the Central Maryland Regional Transportation plan.
- Support funders in convening with a focus on housing for the homeless

▪ **Federal Advocacy Actions:** None identified at this time.

### 2020 Affinity Group Monitoring Areas

- **Aging**
  - Programs of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE)
  - Aging in place policies
  - Division of Aging services funding formal
- **Arts**
  - Arts and Entertainment Districts
- **Community Investment**
  - Water Infrastructure and Billing

- **Education**
  - Kirwan Commission
- **Green**
  - Energy and Green Jobs
  - Plastic Bag Ban
  - Maryland Carbon Tax
- **Health**
  - Maryland Easy Enrollment Health Insurance Program
  - Increasing State Funding for the Thrive by Three Fund
  - Supporting Medicaid Reimbursement for Doulas to Improve Birth Outcomes
  - Implementation of the Medicaid Adult Dental Pilot Program (And possible expansion of the program to serve all adults on Medicaid, not just those who are dually eligible for Medicare and Medicaid)
  - Medicaid waivers for Managed Care Organizations
  - Overdose Prevention and Infectious Disease Prevention Sites

### Initiative Priorities

- **Baltimore Workforce Collaborative**
  - Increase public sector investment to grow what works in workforce development
    - Expand use of uncapped federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education and Training (SNAP E&T) funding for provision of employment, training, and support services to SNAP participants in Baltimore City.
    - Create new Baltimore City funding pool to support sector-based workforce development approaches in alignment with sustained philanthropic support.
    - Increase city and state investments in workforce solutions by directing a larger number of procurement dollars to vendors that include a job training and placement mission to their work.
  - Advocate for changes to policies, practices, and budget allocations to address major system barriers to scale, including:
    - Transportation policies and solutions;
    - Adult basic education bridges and funding;
    - Criminal justice reform and reentry;
    - Equitable job quality policies and practices; and
    - Reduction of the benefits cliff effect.
- **Baltimore Integration Partnership** – None Identified
- **School-Centered Neighborhood Investment Initiative** – To be determined
- **Funders Together to End Homelessness, Baltimore** – To be determined