

# THE ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

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## HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL HEARING

### SAO 11 – FY 2010

*AN ACT transferring \$380,000 from the Grants Fund, Contingency Reserve to the Department of Housing and Community Development for the Economic Development Initiative Special Project Grant.*

**January 19, 2010**

### TESTIMONY

**By Harry Schwarz**

Good evening, I am Harry Schwarz and I am the vice president of The Association of Community Services (ACS). ACS is an organization that represents over 125 service providers and community advocates in Howard County. ACS members assist more than 200,000 County residents annually. ACS strongly supports SAO 11 which requests approval for \$380,000 of grant funding to develop and construct two community rooms, one at Morningside Park and one at Guilford Gardens.

The community rooms will provide space for computer work stations, children's play areas, business and technology work centers, after-school programs, community meetings and on-site instructional classes and seminars.

ACS is especially pleased to support this funding for two important reasons. First, this funding supports one of ACS key priorities of workforce development for low income households. Research has shown that low wage work alone is insufficient to move families from poverty to economic self-sufficiency and what is needed is a fully integrated, holistic work support system if success is to be achieved in the long term.

Families need employability and enhanced work skills to seek, retain and advance in the employment world.

Second, the grant is federal funding and reduces dependence on limited resources of the State and Howard County. ACS vigorously supports seeking funding from all sources including federal and private sectors. Seeking such funding should be addressed through a comprehensive, coordinated approach that considers the inter-related programs and services of all County departments and agencies.

Thank you for this opportunity to support this important project.

Respectfully,

Harry Schwarz