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July 1, 2022

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky
Chair, Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
2 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Vanessa E. Atterbeary
Chair, House Ways and Means Committee
Room 131
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Senate Bill 504 (2020) - Office of the Attorney General – Special Education Ombudsman
MSAR# 12813

Dear Chair Pinsky and Chair Atterbeary,

Pursuant to § 6-506 of the State Government Article, “[o]n or before July 1, 2022, and each July 1 thereafter, the Ombudsman shall, consistent with federal and state privacy laws and in accordance with § 2-1257 of this Article, submit a report to the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee and the House Committee on Ways and Means that includes: (1) the number and type of calls received on the toll-free telephone number during the previous year; (2) any patterns of complaints filed by parents identified under § 6-504(a)(7) of this subtitle; (3) a summary of the services provided by the Ombudsman during the previous year; and (4) any recommendations the Ombudsman determines are appropriate and necessary concerning the State’s implementation of special education services and procedures.”

Unfortunately, the Governor never put money in the budget for the Office of Attorney General to stand up the Special Education Ombudsman’s Office, nor did he allocate any PINS to hire an Ombudsman and necessary staff. Nor has the General Assembly mandated an appropriation. We have repeatedly brought this issue to the attention of the Governor’s Office and the General Assembly. As a result, this letter and its attendant five copies to Sarah T. Albert, Mandated

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Reports Specialist, Library and Information Services, will have to suffice for meeting the annual reporting requirement in § 6-506 of the State Government Article.

We look forward to obtaining the necessary funding and staff to stand up this important governmental function.

Sincerely,

/S/

Hannibal G. Williams II Kemerer
Chief Counsel, Legislative Affairs

cc: Sarah T. Albert
Mandated Reports Specialist
Library and Information Services
90 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401