

**CHAPTER 346**

**(House Bill 1015)**

AN ACT concerning

**Homelessness Prevention Program**

FOR the purpose of requiring the Department of Human Resources to establish a homelessness prevention program to assist families and individuals in a housing crisis; altering the purpose of the shelter, nutrition, and service program to include services to prevent families and individuals from becoming homeless; specifying the types of services that the homelessness prevention program may offer; requiring the Department to establish a housing counselor and aftercare program for a certain purpose; requiring the Department to submit a certain report to certain persons; defining certain terms; and generally relating to preventing families and individuals from becoming homeless.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
Article 88A – Social Services Administration  
Section 131, 132, 133, 136, and 137  
Annotated Code of Maryland  
(1991 Replacement Volume and 1992 Supplement)

Preamble

WHEREAS, Homelessness continues to be a devastating problem for thousands of individuals and families in Maryland and the community of which they belong; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Human Resources reports that in fiscal year 1992, almost 50,000 people were served in shelters in Maryland; and

WHEREAS, Data shows that 40 percent of the homeless that are being served in shelters throughout Maryland are families and 1/4 to 1/3 include children under the age of 18; and

WHEREAS, Current resources are inadequate to meet the immediate needs of people in a housing crisis; and

WHEREAS, In 1992, individuals were turned away from a shelter over 43,000 times in Maryland; and

WHEREAS, In fiscal year 1992, in Maryland, over 21,000 households were evicted from their homes; and

WHEREAS, There are proven and effective programs that help prevent families and individuals from becoming homeless and help those in shelters relocate into permanent housing; and

WHEREAS, National studies show that preventing citizens from becoming homeless is cost-effective, saving \$5 for every \$1 spent on prevention; now, therefore,