



Michael Russell, MHS, CPRS  
Program Director  
Umbrella Therapeutic Services  
5310 C Street SE  
Washington, DC 20019  
(202) 575-2834  
mrussell@umbrellacares.com

April 11, 2025

Tonya Torres Trice  
Interim Director  
Child and Family Services Agency  
200 I Street, SE  
Washington, DC 20003

**Re: Zoning Case 24-19 — Support for Text Amendment to Subtitle B, Section 100.2**  
*(Definition of "Youth Residential Care Home" to include foster youth up to age 20)*

Dear Interim Director Trice,

On behalf of Umbrella Therapeutic Services, I write to express our full support for the Child and Family Services Agency's (CDSA) petition to amend the zoning definition of a *Youth Residential Care Home* to include foster children up to the age of 20.

For over two decades, Umbrella Therapeutic Services has been committed to serving youth in the District of Columbia—especially older male youth ages 18 to 20—who are disproportionately represented in foster care and often come from underserved communities. We have consistently demonstrated success in helping young men reach their personal and developmental goals within a structured, supportive group home environment.

Our homes are designed to be welcoming and family-like, offering spacious living areas, comfortable bedrooms, and communal kitchens where residents engage in shared responsibilities

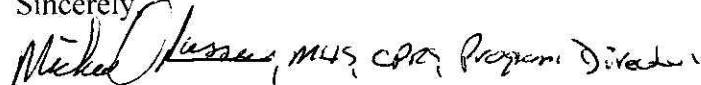
and learn life skills. In this setting, youth gain the tools necessary to navigate relationships with peers, staff, and authority figures, while building meaningful connections that reflect the value of family and community.

This population requires local, stable placements that support independent living readiness and personal growth. While out-of-state residential treatment may offer certain clinical supports, it often lacks the community-based context and family reunification opportunities necessary for long-term success. Our approach is rooted in the belief that youth thrive when they remain connected to their communities, and when their care is grounded in dignity, purpose, and personal ownership of the healing process.

At Umbrella, we emphasize not just client-centered care, but family- and community-centered values. Our mission is to create permanent, positive change by recognizing and building on the strengths of the youth, their families, and their cultural networks. We believe this zoning amendment will support CFSA's ability to license group homes that reflect these values for youth ages 13–20.

In closing, we respectfully urge the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia to approve the proposed amendment to Subtitle B, Section 100.2. By doing so, the Commission will help ensure that older youth in care continue to have access to the essential services and stable housing they need—and deserve—right here in their home communities. This investment in youth will yield lasting benefits for neighborhoods across the District of Columbia.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Russell, MHS, CPRS, Program Director".

**Michael Russell, MHS, CPRS**  
Program Director  
Umbrella Therapeutic Services