Maryland
DEPARTMENT OF DISABILITIES

DATE: February 25, 2020
BILL: House Bill 648: Maryland Emergency Management Agency- Definitions and Authority
COMMITTEE: House Health and Government Operations
POSITION: Letter of Support

Dear Chair Pendergrass,

The Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD) is pleased to write a letter of support for House Bill 648: Maryland Emergency Management Agency - Definitions and Authority. This bill provides clarity to MEMA's authority, including overall coordination of State agencies that have a supporting role during a disaster declaration. Under the state coordinating function (SCF) matrix, MDOD provides the expertise, tools, resources, and responsibility for planning for the 'Whole Community'. This term is used to encompass people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs. MDOD also supports other state agencies, such as Maryland Human Services in response and recovery planning.

The Secretary of MDOD, or the Secretary's designee, is a voting member of several Commissions and Boards that have a nexus with MDOD's responsibilities to ensure all preparedness, response, and recovery services are accessible and free of barriers to individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs; including Commission to Advance Next Generation 911 Across Maryland, Active Assailant Interdisciplinary Work Group, and Maryland Center for School Safety Sub Cabinet.

MDOD supports this bill's emphasis on risk reduction, which may lead to improved resilience, which is articulated on page 3:
AUTHORIZE A COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
27 SYSTEM THAT EMPOWERS ALL STATE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES TO
 28 SYSTEMATICALLY PREPARE FOR, MITIGATE, RESPOND TO, AND RECOVER FROM
 29 POTENTIAL OR ACTUAL EMERGENCIES THROUGH RISK REDUCTION AND
30 CONSEQUENCE MANAGEMENT

If you have any questions please contact Elizabeth Hall, Director of Interagency Affairs, (410)767-3652, elizabeth.hall2@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

Carol A. Beatty

Carol A. Beatty, Secretary