

MICHELE GUYTON
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Ways and Means Committee

Early Childhood Subcommittee

Education Subcommittee



The Maryland House of Delegates
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HB662-Autism Coordinator Revisions

SUPPORT

February 22, 2022

Dear Madame Chair and Members of the Appropriations Committee,

I am writing to request a favorable report on HB662 which makes a few simple changes to the State Coordinator of Autism Strategy and Stakeholder's Advisory Group that was established with the passage of HB847 in 2020. The Autism Coordinator position has recently been filled and the Stakeholder group met for the first time just last week. HB662 makes a few statutory changes due to the movement of this position to the Governor's Coordinating Offices and observation of the initial implementation of the original bill. HB662 is similar, but not identical, to the Departmental Bill introduced by the Governor (SB169) already heard in the Senate Finance Committee. I respectfully request a favorable report on HB662 rather than the competing SB169.

HB662 adds the Autism Coordinator to the Interagency Disabilities Board, adds Members of the House and Senate to the stakeholder's advisory group, and moves the responsibility of staffing the office to the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives from the Department of Disabilities. HB662 retains the Coordinator as Chair of the Advisory Group as required by HB847 and requires the Coordinator to be appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate in order to elevate this position and provide legislative oversight to ensure that the most qualified applicants serve in this position.

Thank you for your consideration of HB662.

Sincerely,

Delegate Michele Guyton

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Delegate Michele Guyton".