



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Dennis R. Schrader, Secretary

March 8, 2022

The Honorable Delores G. Kelley
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

**RE: SB 868 - Developmental Disabilities Administration – Self-Directed Services
(Self-Direction Act of 2022) - Letter of Information**

Dear Chair Kelley and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) respectfully submits this letter of information for Senate Bill (SB) 868 - Developmental Disabilities Administration – Self-Directed Services (Self-Direction Act of 2022).

It is estimated that SB 868, as written, will cost MDH an annual increase between \$280,176,403 and \$558,151,603, with a \$140,088,202 – \$279,075,802 General Funds impact. This approximation is based on utilization of 50% – 100% of these services for one full year.

It should also be noted, MDH worked tirelessly this past year with the Health and Government Operations (HGO) Self Directed Services Workgroup led by Delegate Lewis-Young. The workgroup was comprised of advocates, stakeholders, and elected officials attending monthly meetings from July through December, 2021. Several subgroups also held additional meetings during that time. MDH continues to have the shared goal of promoting and strengthening self-direction as a service modality that firmly represents our values for empowerment, choice, and control.

At the first workgroup meeting and several times thereafter, it was stated the goal was for the advocates, stakeholders, and MDH to come to a compromise in order to avoid legislation. MDH took this charge seriously and worked tirelessly throughout the second half of the year to accomplish this mission. As a result of the meetings, the workgroup developed six (6) recommended areas for policy changes.

MDH reviewed all the recommendations and shared at the final workgroup meeting that MDH is committed to immediately focusing on three of their specified action areas: (1) near term expansion opportunities, (2) potential expansion opportunities, and (3) areas where the requested flexibility already exists. Areas being actioned by MDH in the near term include, but are not limited to, increasing the allowable support broker hours per month, updating the support broker definition for stronger alignment with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

definition, allowing overnight support as a component of personal supports, and coordination of community services orientation to new and current participants. Please note, all of the recommendations put forth by the workgroup are contributing to MDH's roadmap for our self-direction priority areas and expansion opportunities.

MDH looks forward to continuing to advance the work ahead using the established workgroups and committees to engage and update on the areas of opportunities. We will also leverage these groups to address the areas identified as currently available, but where increased resources and education is needed to ensure that the flexibility of self-direction and the vital role of families in these services is well understood and accessed.

If you have any questions, please contact Heather Shek, Director of Governmental Affairs, at heather.shek@maryland.gov or (443) 695-4218.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dennis R. Schrader".

Dennis R. Schrader
Secretary