



Montgomery County

Office of Intergovernmental Relations

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SB 622

DATE: March 7, 2023

SPONSOR: Senators Zucker, Guzzone, and McCray

ASSIGNED TO: Budget & Taxation

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POSITION: INFORMATIONAL ONLY- Department of Health and Human Services

Medicaid Waiver Programs – Waitlist and Registry Reduction (End the Wait Act)

Beginning in fiscal year 2024, Senate Bill 622 permits funding in the annual budget for the Community Pathways Waiver, the Community Supports Waiver, the Family Supports Waiver, the Brain Injury Waiver, the Home- and Community-Based Options Waiver, the Medical Day Care Services Waiver, and the Model Waiver for Medically Fragile Children programs to be allocated for the purpose of hiring and retaining providers. The bill amends Supplemental Budget Number 5 of 2022 to reflect that the fiscal year 2023 budget for these waiver programs may also be used for the purpose of hiring and retaining providers.

Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (MCDHHS) submits this informational testimony to bring attention to the issue of whether Adult Evaluation and Review Services (AERS) nurses and the County's Local Health Department Nurse Monitoring Program qualify under the bill for funding to be used for hiring and retaining providers. MCDHHS employs AERS nurses to conduct assessments for all Montgomery County residents in the Home and Community Based Options waiver. MCDHHS is also home to the Local Health Department Nurse Monitoring Program which does the nurse monitoring for all HCBS program participants in the County (except for HCBS Options waiver clients who are in assisted living). Under Senate Bill 622, the funding may be allocated to certain waiver programs, including the Home and Community Based Options Waiver, for hiring and retaining providers.

MCDHHS supports increasing the number of individuals in the State served by Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS). Maryland maintains one of the largest waiting lists for HCBS in the country¹, and MCDHHS wholeheartedly supports the legislative efforts in recent years to increase the number of Marylanders served by the waivers covered by Senate Bill 622. However, as more Marylanders receive services through the Home- and Community-Based Options waiver, the workload for the AERS and nurse monitoring programs in MCDHHS will increase concomitantly. MCDHHS would appreciate clarification that funding under the bill will also be directed to AERS and Local Health Department Nurse Monitoring Programs so they can be adequately staffed to ensure people are able to enter waiver services in a timely and effective manner.

¹ <https://files.kff.org/attachment/Issue-Brief-Key-State-Policy-Choices-About-Medicaid-Home-and-Community-Based-Services>