



MARYLAND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COALITION

Dedicated to the rights and quality of life for people with developmental disabilities in Maryland

House Health and Government Operations Committee
HB 1149: Medicaid Waiver Programs – Waitlist and Registry Reduction
(End the Wait Act)
March 7, 2023

Position: Support with Sponsor's Amendments



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The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Coalition (DD Coalition) is comprised of five statewide organizations that are committed to improving the opportunities and outcomes for Marylanders with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). As such, we strongly support this bill, with the sponsor's amendments that make sure the \$30 million is used to provide community services to people waiting for services and also allows the funds to be used to expand community capacity.

WHAT does this bill and the amendment do?

- Clarifies that the \$30 million in the dedicated purpose account must be used to expand *all* Medicaid waivers, with \$10 million specifically for the Autism Waiver.
- Allows a portion of the funds to be used to expand provider capacity, including hiring and retaining staff and providers, increasing provider rates, and addressing other issues that limit provider capacity.

WHY is this important?

- **Over 18,000 Marylanders with developmental disabilities rely on services through the DDA Medicaid waivers, the community providers that provide those services, and the Department of Health, for the vital supports that enable them to live and work in their communities.** Their families are also reliant on DDA-funded services so that they can continue to work and support their families, while their loved ones with developmental disabilities have access to the supports they need and want.
- **There are long waits (many years) from the date an individual gets on a waiting list for waiver services until they are able to receive the service from the State.**

THE NEED: Almost 4,000 people stuck on the Developmental Disabilities Waiting List

- **There are over 3,800 people on the waiting list for DDA services. Those people need services now.**
- **There are over 4,000 additional people on the DDA "future request" list.** The "future request" list is for people who may not need services or supports now, but may need them in the future.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated an already existing workforce crisis. **Direct support professionals play a critical role in people's lives.** As a result, service providers will not be able to provide the critical ongoing services and supports to Marylanders with developmental disabilities and their families. **Funds must be able to be used to build the capacity of providers, including the recruitment and retention of providers and direct support professionals, increasing provider rates, and addressing other issues that limit provider capacity.** The clarifying sponsor amendments ensure this happens.

The DD Coalition strongly supports HB1149 because it will help address the critical need for services and have a positive impact on thousands of Marylanders with IDD and their families.

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