

Bruno & Isabelle Galetovic

5525 Alta Vista Rd.
Bethesda, Maryland 20814

Date: February 28, 2024

Ref: Bill Number: HB0352 or SB0362
The Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act of 2024
Bruno Galetovic (for Gael Galetovic)
Position on the bill: UNFAVORABLE

Dear Chairperson and Esteemed Committee Members,

Have you ever faced the dilemma of trying to run a race with your shoelaces knotted together? This might sound like the beginning of a bad joke, but unfortunately, it's the reality we're confronted with due to the proposed changes in ARTICLE-HEALTH-GENERAL SECTION 7-101 and SECTION 7-409 within HB0352/SB0362. This scenario is akin to our current predicament, where the legislative shoelaces of my son, Gael, and others benefiting from the Self Direction Act of 2022, are being unnecessarily tied.

Keeping the sanctity of the Self Direction Act of 2022 intact, without imposing arbitrary limits on Individual and Family Directed Goods and Services (IFDGS), is not just a policy preference—it is an imperative for maintaining the dignity, independence, and empowerment of those it serves. Why should we tether those we aim to empower, limiting their flight to the confines of an invisible cage?

The proposition to cap IFDGS is as counterproductive as equipping a submarine with a screen door. It doesn't protect or serve; it merely hinders growth and diminishes the safety and independence we've fought so hard to achieve. Are we in the business of creating barriers or demolishing them?

Consider this: IFDGS is not about expanding budgets but about allowing us to fully utilize already allocated resources. It's about enabling us to steer our lives within the harbor of our approved funding without arbitrary constraints. Why then, would we choose to anchor those ready and able to sail?

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Reflecting on the transformative impact the Self Direction Act has had since its inception, it's clear that any form of cap is not just an ill-fitting accessory but a direct impediment to progress. We've witnessed firsthand the life-changing benefits of self-direction - benefits that extend far beyond the individual to touch the lives of families and communities.

In closing, I urge you not to retreat from the progress we've made towards fostering genuine independence and community integration. The real question before us is whether we want to be remembered for erecting walls or for building bridges that connect us all to a brighter, more inclusive future.

Respectfully,

Bruno Galetovic

(Father and Legal Guardian of Gael Galetovic)