

Support for HB822 and SB790: Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Employed Individuals with Disabilities

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From: National Federation of the Blind of Maryland

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To: Health and Government Operations Committee

The members of the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland urge the members of the Health and Government Operations Committee to support HB822 and SB790. The employed individuals with disabilities (EID) program is one of the most important programs that Maryland has to support people who are on Medicaid. It encourages persons with disabilities to go to work by not penalizing them. They may keep their Medicaid benefits while working. Fear of losing benefits is the biggest reason why some persons with disabilities do not work.

HB822/SB790 are good bills because it will reduce red tape and will permit greater use of the EID program. Students who are 16 years of age or older may work and use EID to do so. It will eliminate the gap between a student's participation in a transition program and getting a job. This bill will also eliminate the penalty of a spouse having income. Senior citizens with disabilities may continue to work and receive their benefits without regard to their age. Currently, EID stops at age 64. Social Security has a sliding scale for people to retire based on age, which currently is at 67 but will increase with time. In short, this bill contains provisions that will help every segment of the disabled population.

This bill will allow more people with disabilities to participate in the EID program and become taxpayers. It will allow disabled individuals to pay taxes for a longer period of time. Please vote in favor of HB822/SB790.