



DATE: March 27, 2024

BILL: SB 592: Maryland Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Program - Materials for Individualized Education Program, Individualized Family Service Plan, and 504 Plan Meetings

COMMITTEE: House Ways & Means Committee

POSITION: Favorable

Dear Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and Members of the Ways & Means Committee,

The Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD) is pleased to submit this letter of support for Senate Bill 592: Maryland Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Program - Materials for Individualized Education Program, Individualized Family Service Plan, and 504 Plan Meetings.

Under SB 592, local school systems would be required to provide parents with informational materials regarding the Maryland ABLE Program at their child's yearly individualized education program (IEP) meeting, individualized family service plan team meeting, or 504 plan meeting. Additionally, materials provided must be in the parent's native language.

Maryland ABLE accounts are an important tool that helps individuals with disabilities save money and pay for qualified disability-related expenses without putting their state or federal benefits at risk. While these accounts promote independence and greater financial security, they are underutilized in the state. This bill seeks to change that by sharing information directly with people who can benefit from opening an ABLE account.

Promoting the health, independence, and quality of life of individuals with disabilities are values shared by both Maryland ABLE and MDOD. By increasing awareness of ABLE accounts we can ensure these values are realized by more people across the state.

For these reasons, the Maryland Department of Disabilities respectfully requests a favorable report for SB 592.

If you have any questions please contact Lisa Belcastro, Deputy Secretary, Lisa.Belcastro@maryland.gov, (443) 941-5094.

Sincerely,


Carol A. Beatty, Secretary