

SB242.Council.Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Rachel London

Position: FAV



Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

CREATING CHANGE • IMPROVING LIVES

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

January 16, 2025

SB 242: Department of Information Technology – Maryland Digital Service - Establishment

Position: **Support**

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council (DD Council), a statewide public policy organization led by people with developmental disabilities and their families, creates change to make it possible for people with developmental disabilities to lead the lives they want with the support they need. SB 242 is another way to make sure that happens.

What does SB 242 do?

- Establishes the Maryland Digital Service (MDDS) within the Department of Information Technology (DOIT)
- Centralizes a unit of DOIT to collaborate with other agencies, departments, and units of State government to support improved service delivery
- Prioritizes the development, procurement, and implementation of user-friendly, accessible, and multilingual digital platforms

Why is this important?

- **It prioritizes accessible, inclusive government, and helps dismantle barriers for Marylanders.** The primary purpose of MDDS is to enhance service delivery to Maryland residents and state agency staff through user-centered design, software development, and best practices in product management.
- **Making information accessible to everyone is fundamentally a practice of inclusion.** Technology is a central way Marylanders access and use services the State provides, and SB 242 directly addresses the diverse needs of all Marylanders.

The Council's vision is that people with and without disabilities live, learn, work, and play together. To make that happen, everyone must be able to access the information and resources they need and want. The Council continues to work closely with DoIT to implement Maryland's Plain Language Initiative. It is clear that the MDDS is ready to address gaps in access to information in digital services, such as inconsistent accessibility, outdated design, and other barriers for Marylanders. **The Council strongly supports SB 242 because it helps make State services more accessible, equitable, and efficient.**

Contact: Rachel London, Executive Director: RLondon@md-council.org

217 E. Redwood Street, Suite 1300 • Baltimore, MD 21202 • 410.767.3670 • md-council.org

Dee Sapp, *Chairperson* • Rachel London, Esq., *Executive Director*

SB 242

Uploaded by: Ronza Othman

Position: FAV

Subject: Favorable SB 242: Establishing Digital Services in DOIT

Date: January 16, 2025

From: National Federation of the Blind of Maryland

15 Charles Plaza, #3002

President@nfbmd.org

To: Senate Education Environment and Energy Committee

The Members of the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland urge the members of the Senate Education Environment and Energy Committee to give SB 242 a favorable report. We have been working on nonvisual access issues for many many years. This bill will be an important step in bringing government information to the blind citizens of Maryland.

SB 242 calls for the secretary to name a digital experience officer as the head of this new unit of the Department of Information Technology. Having an official in charge of the digital services unit means that there will be clear responsibility for accessibility. There will be less chance of government entities breaking nonvisual access when they upgrade their various software. Establishing the digital services unit also gives the needed priority for access in both platforms and software development.

What is the point of having public information if some of the citizens have no access to it? Making government information accessible to all the citizens in Maryland will definitely be improved by this bill.

Please vote Yes on SB 242. SB 242 will improve the efficiency of DOIT because it will identify a specific unit to carry out these responsibilities.

For questions, please contact me at President@nfbmd.org or at 443-426-4110.

Senate Bill 242 - DoIT Written Testimony.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Sara Elalamy

Position: FAV



Wes Moore | Governor
Aruna Miller | Lt. Governor
Katie Savage | Secretary

TO: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
FROM: Department of Information Technology
RE: Senate Bill 242 - Department of Information Technology - Maryland Digital Service - Establishment
DATE: January 16, 2025
POSITION: Support

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman, Chair
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chairman Feldman,

The Department of Information Technology (DoIT) supports Senate Bill 242 - Department of Information Technology - Maryland Digital Service - Establishment. This bill codifies into law the Maryland Digital Service (MDDS) within the Department of Information. Its primary purpose is to enhance service delivery to Maryland residents and state agency staff through user-centered design, software development, and best practices in product management.

On January 8, 2024 the Moore- Miller administration announced taking major actions to transform the digital experience in state government which included the creation of the Maryland Digital Service within the Maryland Department of Information Technology.

The following are key benefits of codifying MDDS into law:

- The creation of the MDDS prioritizes the development of user-friendly, accessible, and multilingual digital platforms. By ensuring inclusivity for all residents, including individuals with disabilities, SB 242 directly addresses the diverse needs of Maryland's population.
- Consolidating and streamlining websites and digital applications will reduce redundancy, complexity, and maintenance costs. This efficiency will result in financial savings and a more seamless experience for residents and agency staff.
- The MDDS's emphasis on user-centered design, accessibility standards, and best practices will elevate the quality of digital service delivery, ensuring it meets modern expectations and fosters trust in government systems.
- The appointment of a Chief Digital Experience Officer ensures that the MDDS will have focused leadership to guide its initiatives. Additionally, mandated collaboration between



Wes Moore | Governor
Aruna Miller | Lt. Governor
Katie Savage | Secretary

state government units and the MDDS aligns digital initiatives with the Statewide Information Technology Master Plan, ensuring cohesive and effective implementation.

As technology becomes increasingly central to how residents interact with government services, it is critical to ensure that these systems are intuitive, efficient, and accessible. The Maryland Digital Service is poised to address existing gaps in digital infrastructure, such as inconsistent accessibility, outdated design, and fragmented platforms, which can create barriers for residents seeking services. By leveraging innovative approaches and centralizing efforts, SB 242 will continue to modernize Maryland's digital landscape and make government services more equitable and efficient.

For these reasons, the Maryland Department of Information Technology respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 242.

Best,

Katie Olson Savage
Secretary
Department of Information Technology