



Empowering People to Lead Systemic Change

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DisabilityRightsMD.org

## HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

### House Bill 396: Residential Child Care Programs—Education of Children and Training of Child and Youth Care Practitioners

February 11, 2026

Position: SUPPORT

Disability Rights Maryland (DRM) is the protection and advocacy organization for the state of Maryland; the mission of the organization, part of a national network of similar agencies, is to advocate for the legal rights of people with disabilities throughout the state. We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 396, which would require both coordination between a child's school and residential child care programs and a training curriculum for residential child and youth care providers.

DRM particularly appreciates that House Bill 396 includes provisions requiring residential child care providers to implement educational goals for children with disabilities that are consistent with their individual education programs, as well as behavioral supports and goals consistent with a child's behavioral intervention plan. DRM has represented clients over the years who have struggled in residential child care settings because their disabilities have not been appropriately accommodated; child care providers have not always been willing to consult with school staff and school staff have not always responded to requests from the providers who have sought help. DRM has sometimes asked that child care providers be included in IEP meetings for our clients so we can address issues comprehensively across environments. Coordination between school staff and residential child care providers can help by giving child care providers more information about the children they are serving and additional tools to meet the needs of those children. Particularly because behavior plans must be implemented with consistency, requiring residential child care providers to implement behavior supports and goals that reinforce the child's school-based goals will be helpful.

For these reasons, DRM supports House Bill 396.

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