



**SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT OF
House Bill 847:
State Coordinator for Autism Strategy and Advisory Stakeholder Group on Autism-Related Needs**

OFFERED ON BEHALF OF
The Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities
(MANSEF)

**BEFORE THE HOUSE HEALTH AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
February 26, 2020**

The Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities (MANSEF) has 75 nonpublic special education schools across Maryland. We currently serve approximately 3800 publicly funded school children and employ over 2500 teachers, clinicians and administrators. MANSEF offers our support of House Bill 847 with one amendment.

This bill creates an Advisory Stakeholder Group with membership consisting of the following members:

- STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS OR DESIGNEE,
- SECRETARY OF DISABILITIES OR DESIGNEE,
- SECRETARY OF HUMAN SERVICES OR DESIGNEE,
- SECRETARY OF HEALTH OR DESIGNEE,
- ONE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE MD SPEECH-LANGUAGE-HEARING ASSOC.;
- ONE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE MD DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL;
- A SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST;
- A PHYSICAL THERAPIST;
- AN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST;
- A PEDIATRICIAN;
- TWO PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH AUTISM;
- TWO SELF-ADVOCATES WITH AUTISM;
- ONE REPRESENTATIVE OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN THE STATE;
- ONE REPRESENTATIVE OF LOCAL PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEMS IN THE STATE;

We respectfully request the addition of a nonpublic special education school representative. There is a wealth of expertise in the nonpublic special education school community and we have many member schools that specialize in the delivery of services specifically for children with autism. One of the reasons we are in support of this bill is because we believe having a centralized State strategic plan is helpful to identify gaps in the service delivery and to collaborate with local school systems, law enforcement agencies, state and local governments, community organizations, parents and other stakeholders to provide a comprehensive, coordinated approach of resources and services.