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House Economic Matters Committee
**HB 124: Occupational Safety and Health Standards to Protect
Employees – Aerosol Transmissible Diseases and COVID- 19.**
Position: Oppose

January 28, 2021

The Maryland Association of Community Services (MACS) is a non-profit association of over 100 agencies across Maryland serving people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). MACS members provide residential, day and supported employment services to thousands of Marylanders, so that they can live, work and fully participate in their communities.

While health and safety is central to the core mission of enabling people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) to live meaningful, inclusive lives in their communities, MACS respectfully opposes HB 124 out of concern that the bill is too prescriptive in the face of changing state and federal guidance during an evolving public health emergency. As this pandemic has made clear, the CDC and Maryland Department of Health must have flexibility to issue guidance as scientific understanding and research evolves regarding a particular pathogen. The bill as drafted is illustrative of this concern in light of inconsistencies between bill provisions and CDC guidance regarding the length of time and circumstances under which an employee who has tested positive for COVID-19 may return to work.

Additionally, DDA-licensed community service providers are already highly regulated with regard to health, safety and emergency protocols as part of the regular licensing process, including a requirement under *COMAR 10.22.02.10(A)(17)* that requires IDD providers to implement “State and federally required safety precautions, infection control, and standard precautions....” The COMAR wording provides sufficient flexibility to permit implementation of evolving standards while mandating compliance with State and federal infection control guidelines.

We share the bill sponsor’s concern about the health and safety of our employees but believe that the constraints that would be imposed by this bill would hinder our ability to keep our workforce safe.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Kallins
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