

February 16, 2021

**Senate Bill 441- Developmental Disabilities Administration - Self-Directed Services - SUPPORT**

Chair Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman, and members of the Finance Committee,

The National Alliance on Mental Illness, Maryland and our 11 local affiliates across the state represent a statewide network of more than 45,000 families, individuals, community-based organizations and service providers. NAMI Maryland is dedicated to providing education, support and advocacy for persons with mental illnesses, their families and the wider community.

NAMI Maryland supports **SB 441** and the establishment of the State Advisory Council on Self-Directed Services within the Maryland Department of Health (MDH). The work of the State Advisory Council on Self Directed Services outlined in the bill include:

- making recommendations to DDA on how to improve the self-directed services process and experience of using self-directed services;
- providing a forum for input from Maryland residents related to self-directed services;
- inventorying and track services and supports available through home- and community-based services programs;
- reviewing and make recommendations regarding disparities between the services and supports received by individuals who use self-directed services and individuals who use services provided by the State;
- reviewing and make recommendations regarding certain policies to the General Assembly.

The goal of NAMI Maryland is to respect and promote self-determination, recovery and full community inclusion for people who have been diagnosed with a mental illness and who depend on government subsidized mental wellness services. Self-Directed Care is a service delivery model in which program participants make their own healthcare choices and actively participate in their recovery from serious mental illnesses.

For these reasons, NAMI Maryland asks for a favorable report on **SB 441**.