

2021 MOTA HB 718 Senate Side.pdf

Uploaded by: Faulkner, Rachael

Position: FAV



Maryland Occupational Therapy Association

PO Box 36401, Towson, Maryland 21286 ♦ motamembers.org

Committee: Senate Finance Committee
Bill Number: House Bill 718
Title: State Coordinator for Autism Strategy and Advisory Stakeholder Group on Autism-Related Needs – Location and Funding
Hearing Date: March 23, 2021
Position: Support as Amended

The Maryland Occupational Therapy Association (MOTA) supports as amended *House Bill 718 – State Coordinator for Autism Strategy and Advisory Stakeholder Group on Autism-Related Needs – Location and Funding*. As amended, this bill relocates the State Coordinator for Autism Strategy from the Maryland Department of Disabilities to the Governor’s Office of Community Initiatives.

Occupational therapy practitioners include both occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants. We provide habilitative services to individuals with autism spectrum disorders across the lifespan. We know first-hand the difficulties many adults with autism, and their families, experience as they leave school and enter adulthood. This includes limits on health care visits for adults and an overall lack of coordination to community supports.

MOTA supported HB 847 in 2020 to establish a state coordinator in the Department of Disabilities (MDOD) and an advisory stakeholder group to develop a strategic plan on autism-related services. MOTA was disappointed that the Department of Disabilities did not fill the position or convene the Advisory Stakeholder Group during the 2020 interim as we are included as a representative on the group. We are hopeful that HB 718 will enable the full implementation of last year’s legislation.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony, and we urge a favorable vote. If we can provide any further information, please contact Rachael Faulkner at rfaulkner@policypartners.net or (410) 693-4000.

2021 TCC HB 718 Senate Side.pdf

Uploaded by: Faulkner, Rachael

Position: FAV



THE COORDINATING CENTER R
INSPIRED SOLUTIONS

Committee: Senate Finance Committee

Bill Number: House Bill 718

Title: State Coordinator for Autism Strategy and Advisory Stakeholder Group on
Autism-Related Needs – Location and Funding

Hearing Date: March 23, 2021

Position: Support as Amended

The Coordinating Center (The Center) supports as amended *House Bill 718 – State Coordinator for Autism Strategy and Advisory Stakeholder Group on Autism-Related Needs – location and Funding*. This bill requires moves the State Coordinator for Autism Strategy to the Governor’s Office of Community Initiatives.

The Center is an independent, care coordination organization with 38 years of experience, coordinating services for more than 10,000 people with disabilities and complex medical needs across the state. We currently serve as the care coordination provider in four jurisdictions under the Maryland Medicaid Autism Waiver, working with children and their families through early adulthood. We know first-hand the challenges young adults face when leaving the education system, including planning for the loss of services and supports under an Individual Education Program (IEP), 504 Plan, or Autism Waiver, as these programs are limited to children and youth under the age of 21.

During the 2020 legislative session, the Center strongly supported HB 847 to create a permanent position within the Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD) and develop a strategic plan for addressing autism-related needs in the state. We were disappointed that even without the coordinator position filled, that the stakeholder group was not convened. We hope that with the support of the Governor’s Office of Community Initiatives, that the State can begin to implement the 2020 legislation.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony, and we urge a favorable vote. If we can provide any further information, please contact Rachael Faulkner at rfaulkner@policypartners.net or (410) 693-4000.

HB 718 - Guyton - Favorable Senate.pdf

Uploaded by: Guyton, Michele

Position: FAV

MICHELE GUYTON
Legislative District 42B
Baltimore County

Ways and Means Committee

Education Subcommittee

Finance Resources Subcommittee



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Marc 23, 2021

In Support – HB 718 – State Coordinator for Autism Strategy and Advisory Stakeholder Group on Autism-Related Needs – Location and Funding

Dear Madam Chair and Members of the Finance Committee,

Thank you for your consideration of HB 718 as amended to move the State Coordinator for Autism Strategy and Advisory Stakeholders Group on Autism-Related Needs from the Department of Disabilities to the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives within the Governor's Coordinating Offices. This move is required by the Governor's budget allocation.

Sincerely,

Delegate Michele Guyton

HB0718 - Senate_FAV_Linwood_Autism Strategy & Advi

Uploaded by: Kasemeyer, Pam

Position: FAV



TO: The Honorable Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Members, Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Michele Guyton

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer

DATE: March 23, 2021

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 718 – *State Coordinator for Autism Strategy and Advisory Stakeholder Group on Autism-Related Needs – Mandated Appropriation*

For more than 60 years, Linwood Center has been providing life-changing programs and services for children and adults living with autism and related developmental disabilities. Linwood currently supports child and adults on the autism spectrum from jurisdictions throughout the State of Maryland. Linwood is one of a handful of programs in the United States and one of only three in the state of Maryland that provides comprehensive education and residential programs throughout the lifespan under one service umbrella. Linwood offers program continuity from childhood into adulthood, developing lifelong relationships with individuals living with autism from elementary school through retirement and old age. Linwood's accredited nonpublic special education program and licensed residential programs provide intensive positive behavioral supports and long-term educational and vocational services to Maryland's autism community. Linwood respectfully offers its **support** for House Bill 718.

In 2020, the General Assembly enacted legislation that established a State Coordinator for Autism Strategy in the Department of Disabilities as well as an Advisory Stakeholder Group on Autism-Related Needs. The State Coordinator, in consultation with the stakeholder group, was charged with identifying and evaluating existing public, private, and nonprofit services for individuals with autism and their families. The findings of that review were to be used to develop a strategic plan for addressing autism-related needs in the State, including employment, housing, health care, training for first responders, and criminal justice professionals, as well as identification and intervention. However, despite the passage of the legislation, there have been no funds appropriated for the position of State Coordinator. Therefore, the work envisioned by the passage of last year's legislation has not moved forward. House Bill 718 provides for the appropriation necessary to fill the State Coordinator position and, therefore, enable the charges and objectives of the original legislation to move forward. The bill, as amended, also moves the position of the State Coordinator to the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives, which Linwood supports.

Given Linwood's extensive history and universally recognized expertise in providing comprehensive education and residential programs for individuals on the autism spectrum, Linwood believes it is essential for a State Coordinator to be hired to enable the State to move forward with the important work reflected in the 2020 legislation. A favorable report is requested.

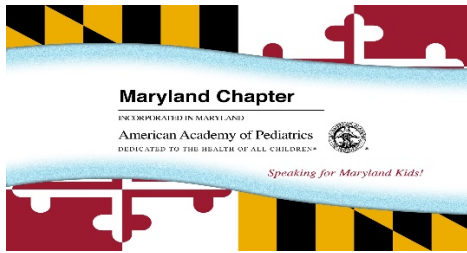
For more information call:

Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
410-244-7000

HB0718 - Senate_FAV_MDAAP_Autism Strategy & Adviso

Uploaded by: Kasemeyer, Pam

Position: FAV



TO: The Honorable Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Members, Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Michele Guyton

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
Danna L. Kauffman

DATE: March 23, 2021

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 718 – *State Coordinator for Autism Strategy and Advisory Stakeholder Group on Autism-Related Needs – Mandated Appropriation*

The Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MDAAP) is a statewide association representing more than 1,100 pediatricians and allied pediatric and adolescent healthcare practitioners in the State and is a strong and established advocate promoting the health and safety of all the children we serve. On behalf of MDAAP, we submit this letter of **support** for House Bill 718.

Legislation passed in 2020 established a State Coordinator for Autism Strategy in the Department of Disabilities as well as an Advisory Stakeholder Group on Autism-Related Needs. However, despite the passage of the legislation, funding has not been provided for the State Coordinator position and therefore the work reflected in the 2020 legislation has not moved forward. House Bill 718 ensures funding for the position of State Coordinator. Passage of House Bill 718 will enable a State Coordinator to be hired and will advance the work outlined in last year's legislation, which requires the State Coordinator, in consultation with the stakeholder group, to identify and evaluate existing public, private, and nonprofit services for individuals with autism and their families. In accordance with the findings of that review, a strategic plan is to be developed for addressing autism-related needs in the State. The plan is also to identify national benchmarks and performance measures to use in evaluating the success in addressing autism-related needs. As amended, the bill also moves the position to the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives, which MDAAP also supports.

MDAAP strongly supports the specific focus on autism-related needs that was reflected in the 2020 legislation. Passage of House Bill 718, as passed by the House, will enable that work to move forward. A favorable report is requested.

For more information call:

Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
Danna L. Kauffman
410-244-7000

Testimony in Support of HB 718 for Senate hearing

Uploaded by: McKibben, Linda

Position: FAV

Testimony in Support of HB 718: State Coordinator for Autism Strategy and Advisory Stakeholder Group on Autism–Related Needs – Location and Funding

TO: Delegate Guyton

FROM: Linda J McKibben MD DrPH FAAP FACPM, CEO, The McKibben Group LLC

98 E Wayne Ave/Silver Spring MD 20901

Phone: 301-557-0059

DATE: March 19, 2021

During the last General Assembly session, I provided oral and written testimony in support of the Bill that became Maryland law to create this new Program. I gave several examples of my experiences as a single mother seeking social, mental healthcare, physical healthcare, and other support resources and services to enhance the quality of my daughter’s life. I explained how my daughter suffered because she cannot fit in with the career and life expectations met by her friends or peers without autism and her needs cross county, state and federal policies and bureaucracies. While good things have been happening for my daughter this past year, including her residency in the unique, inclusive community, The MainStreet Apartments in Rockville. Yet, we continue to struggle to work effectively across multiple systems that fall short of supporting her to live fully independently and with an optimal quality of life, all of which is exacerbated by the COVID pandemic.

For example, recently my daughter wept because her mental health provider seemed to blame her for not explaining her needs clearly; she also felt shamed for needing a parent to be present to help her explain the problem, mental confusion or fog! I know her perception was not a figment of her imagination because I have witnessed similar attitudes from numerous care providers.

Please allow me to briefly paint the picture at the systems level. In Maryland, the state agency for developmental disabilities decided that my daughter does not qualify for services as a person with developmental disabilities; the county mental health agency that asserts we cannot list her ASD as a primary diagnosis because insurers will not cover their mental health and social services; the federal social security system defines “disability” as not capable of holding **any** work and refuses to recognize her ASD as a developmental disability; and our state agency for rehabilitation and work support system has been ineffective in her case. In the past, local mental health units in hospitals refuse or simply cannot find appropriate settings to quickly discharge complex, mentally ill patients and profess to lack “neurodevelopmental” expertise for patients with autism. A hospital social worker told me that I must “make” the system work by complaining about the services that we depend upon for help. A hospital social worker once told me that I must “make” the system work by complaining about the services that we depend upon for help. At that time, the housing system for adults with disabilities was dysfunctional. Lastly, we have multiple challenges to schedule a COVID vaccine for her.

Because of this last critical issue, I want to add that I have great confidence that Delegate Guyton will help select a highly qualified person to direct the new Office of the Coordinator to address the needs of

persons with Autism. As I have discussed with her, we need someone who is lead by sound science to help make good policy. She knows we need a leader who can work across bureaucracies such as mental health, medical and social services; and we need a champion for vaccines and evidence-based therapies and innovative research. In these times, we particularly need a health equity leader to respond to disparities impacting women and persons of color.

Please help to assure that Delegate Guyton's Bill 718 is enacted this year with adequate funding. We must begin to identify and solve systemic problems to assure equity for children and adults with ASD and their families.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Linda Jean McKibben MD DrPH

Linda J McKibben MD DrPH