



## MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

Lowe House Office Building, 6 Bladen Street, Room 200 · Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
Phone 410-841-3374 | 301-858-3374 · 800-492-7122 Ext. 3374 · Fax 410-841-3342 | 301-858-3342  
latino.caucus@house.state.md.us · www.mdlatinocaucus.org

DAVID FRASER-HIDALGO, CHAIR  
JOSELINE A. PEÑA-MELNYK, VICE-CHAIR  
GABRIEL ACEVERO, TREASURER  
JESSE T. PIPPY, SECRETARY  
CESIAH FUENTES, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### MEMBERS

ALFRED CARR  
ALONZO WASHINGTON  
ANNE HEALEY  
ARIANA B. KELLY  
BEN BARNES  
BENJAMIN KRAMER  
BONNIE CULLISON  
BROOKE LIERMAN  
CAROL L. KRIMM  
CHARLOTTE CRUTCHFIELD  
CHERYL KAGAN  
CRAIG ZUCKER  
DAVID MOON  
DIANA FENNEL  
EMILY SHETTY  
EREK BARRON  
ERIC LUEDTKE  
GERALDINE VALENTINO-SMITH  
GUY GUZZONE  
HEATHER BAGNALL  
J. SANDY BARTLETT  
JAMES ROSAPEPE  
JARED SOLOMON  
JAZZ LEWIS  
JEFF WALDSTREICHER  
JEN TERRASA  
JESSICA FELDMARK  
JHEANELLE WILKINS  
JILL P. CARTER  
JIM GILCHRIST  
JULIAN IVEY  
JULIE PALAKOVICH CARR  
KAREN LEWIS YOUNG  
KEN KERR  
LESLEY LOPEZ  
LILY QI  
LISA BELCASTRO  
LORIG CHARKOUDIAN  
MAGGIE MCINTOSH  
MALCOLM AUGUSTINE  
MARC KORMAN  
MARY A. LEHMAN  
MARY WASHINGTON  
MELISSA WELLS  
MIKE ROGERS  
NICOLE WILLIAMS  
PAMELA BEIDLE  
PAMELA QUEEN  
REGINA T. BOYCE  
ROBBYN LEWIS  
SHANE PENDERGRASS  
SHANEKA HENSON  
SHEILA RUTH  
SHELLY HETTLEMAN  
STEPHANIE SMITH  
SUSAN C. LEE  
TERRI HILL  
VAUGHN STEWART  
WANIKA FISHER  
WILL SMITH

TO: Delegate Shane Pendergrass, Chair  
Delegate Joseline Peña-Melnyk, Vice Chair  
Health and Government Operations Committee Members

FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus (MLLC)

DATE: January 26, 2021

RE: HB318 Developmental Disabilities Administration - Self-Directed Services (Self-Direction Act)

### **The MLLC supports HB318 Developmental Disabilities Administration - Self-Directed Services (Self-Direction Act).**

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation that improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a crucial voice in the development of public policy that uplifts the Latino community and benefits the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB318.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) [Disability and Health Data System](#), more than 20% of Maryland's population has a disability and nearly 26% are Latinx. It is important that members of the disability community are listened to and provided the care they need. This includes Maryland's self-directed services and in the manner the program was intended—person-centered.

Traditionally, individuals with developmental disabilities have limited agency and control over their lives. Self-directed services offer these individuals independence and autonomy. A participant with the self-directed waiver can choose their daily schedule, decide how to spend their budget, and hire medical assistance, if needed. These are just a few aspects of a self-directed participant that allows them to have decision-making authority in their lives. Self-directed services improve quality of life for so many Marylanders. In recent years, the program has been stripped of its intended objective of being for individualized services, and of its original services, including family members being compensated as staff.

HB318 establishes the State Advisory Council on Self-Directed Services within the Maryland Department of Health (MDH). The council must report on how the self-directed services process is meeting participants' needs and recommendations for improvement. It also allows an option for a participant's family member to be their support broker. Maryland's disability community is expressing exactly what they need, and it is time we provide it.

The MLLC supports this bill and urges a favorable report on HB318.