



Maryland Statewide
Independent Living
Council

Support HB652: Guidance and Reporting for Residential Service Agencies (RSAs)

February 18, 2020

House Health and Government Operations Committee

Dear Chair Pendergrass and Members of the Committee:

Centers for Independent Living serve people with the most significant disabilities throughout the State of Maryland. We see daily the problems created through the current system where employees are paid minimum wages, but, wrongly classified as contractors, expected to also pay their own withholdings.

Of course, it's illegal. When you are told when and where to work, you're an employee for most purposes. The problem is that these employees are essentially told, "take it or leave it." Mostly, needing to feed their families, they take it. The result is very high turnover, poor service quality and people with disabilities literally left, isolated in their homes and unable to leave, because their worker simply couldn't take it anymore.

In its simplicity, this Bill will send a loud and clear message to thousands of service providers that they can no longer scam people with disabilities, their own workers and the State of Maryland. It is a much-needed step in moving Maryland toward providing a workforce that can meet the challenges of helping people receive care in their own homes rather than expensive nursing facilities with dignity.

The undersigned Centers for Independent Living strongly urge a favorable report on this bill.

Sincerely,

Katie Collins-Ihrke, Executive Director
Accessible Resources for Independence