



House Judiciary Committee

February 18, 2021

**HB 816: Family Law – Support of Destitute Adult Children - Repeal**

Position: **Oppose**

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council, Disability Rights Maryland, and The Arc Maryland work to advance the inclusion, rights, and opportunities of people with developmental disabilities and their families. **We oppose HB 816 because it takes away opportunities from some people with disabilities and their families.**

The effects of disability are intrinsically tied to issues of economic insecurity and instability. The Center for American Progress notes that **“disability or illness can lead to job loss and reduced earnings, barriers to education and skills development, significant additional expenses, and many other challenges that can lead to economic hardship.”**<sup>i</sup>

- One survey found that **more than 70% of family members providing care for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities reported that caregiving interfered with their work.**<sup>ii</sup>
- Another study found that the odds of a worker losing income increase by 48% if the worker lives with a child with disabilities and special health care needs and by 29% if the worker is caring for an adult with disabilities or health issues.<sup>iii</sup>
- **The possibility of getting ongoing support during and after a divorce can help with this.**

**WHAT does this legislation do?**

- Repeals the requirement that a parent provide the support for food, shelter, care, and clothing to an adult child who cannot care and/or support themselves.

**HOW does this impact people with disabilities and their families?**

- 2010 census data shows that there is a nearly **70% unemployment rate among working age adults with significant disabilities.**
- Many of those adults with developmental disabilities live at home with their families who provide ongoing support.
- The intent of this required support is to ensure a parent, that has the means to pay, continues to be responsible for the extraordinary costs of raising a child with disabilities throughout their life.
- For some families, especially one parent households, additional financial support is critical to ensure the person with a disability continues to live the life they need and want.

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<sup>i</sup> January 2015. Center for American Progress, *A Fair Shot for Workers with Disabilities*.

<sup>ii</sup> May 2011. The Arc. *2010 FINDS National Survey: Family and Individual Needs for Disability Support*.

<sup>iii</sup> June 2015. AARP. *Caregiving in the US*.