

To: Delegate Anne Kaiser  
House Ways and Means Committee

Dear Delegate Kaiser and members of the House Ways and Means Committee:

I am urging you to vote YES on House Bill 724 to extend education services to our students with disabilities who have been exceptionally hard hit by the pandemic – the lack of social contact, the lack of daily resource teachers to help them make progress in school and often the difficulty they often have just to understand all the pandemic restrictions. I am the mother of a young adult who went through her high school transition in the early 2000s but for whom all transitions continue to be challenging. I chair the Transition Work Group in Montgomery County, a coalition of service providers and nonprofit organizations dedicated to improving this post-high school transition.

Students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) fall off a service cliff when they leave high school, where they been entitled to benefits, and enter the adult service world, where they must be deemed eligible for benefits. This year - *and any year when school is closed for any significant length of time* – has magnified the challenges and many of our Transitioning Youth have been left without services or options for training, further education or employment.

This HB 0724 introduced by Delegate Michele Guyton gives students an option to continue attending school or receiving education services after the student's graduate date.

I urge you to vote YES on HB 0724. Thank you very much.

Karen Leggett

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