Mohammed Choudhury
State Superintendent of Schools

BILL:	House Bill 660	**DATE:**	March 23, 2022
SUBJECT:	Commission to Study the Division of Rehabilitation Services (Student Job Training Reformation Act)	**COMMITTEE:**	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
POSITION:	Support with Amendments		
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EXPLANATION:

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) supports with amendments **House Bill 660 - Commission to Study the Division of Rehabilitation Services (Student Job Training Reformation Act)**, which would establish the Commission to Study the Division of Rehabilitative Services to evaluate and make recommendations on improving various aspects of the Division of Rehabilitative Services' (DORS) programs and services.

MSDE recognizes the need for a review of the structure and capacity of DORS programs. MSDE believes that attracting and retaining qualified and competent resources is key to providing direct services to clients. Under the directives from the State Superintendent, MSDE is reviewing the position and compensation structures of the key positions to restructure these positions to attract and retain highly qualified staff. The Department is supportive of the establishment of the workgroup to identify areas where the critical services provided by DORS can be enhanced or made more efficient. The Department is also open to a fundamental review of whether DORS is most appropriately placed as a division within MSDE.

While the Commission will benefit from DORS staff, and the expertise and background knowledge they bring, the Department believes that, in order to avoid a conflict of interest and to conduct an appropriate review, the membership and leadership of the Commission should be substantially independent from the daily operation of DORS programs. Additionally, MSDE believes given the close working relationship DORS has with the Department of Disabilities that they should also have a voice on the Commission. To that end, MSDE requests the following amendments:

1. On page 3, line 14, remove the Assistant State Superintendent of DORS as the Chair of the Commission and include language that the Chair shall be selected from among the membership of the Commission.
2. On page 2, lines 15-18, remove the two members specifically referenced within DORS.
3. On page 3, line 3, add “one representative from the Department of Disabilities”.

MSDE respectfully requests that you consider this information as you deliberate **HB 660**. Please contact Yousuf Ahmad, at 410-767-0504 or yousuf.ahmad1@maryland.gov, for any additional information.