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**Laura Howell,**  
Executive Director

## Senate Finance Committee SB 700

### Maryland Department of Health - Prevent Workplace Violence in Health Care Settings Public Awareness Campaign Workgroup

#### Position: Support With Amendment

March 17, 2022

The Maryland Association of Community Services (MACS) is a non-profit association of over 100 agencies across Maryland serving people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). MACS members provide residential, day and supported employment services to thousands of Marylanders, so that they can live, work and fully participate in their communities.

The health and safety of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and the staff who support them, is central to the core mission of DDA licensed home and community-based providers.

These providers are highly regulated with regard to health, safety and emergency protocols of the people they support ([COMAR 10.22.02.10](#)). Staff must undergo extensive, mandatory training that includes best practices in behavior supports, communication and highly individualized training on the needs of each person with IDD that a staff person may be supporting.

In the event that staff is injured by a person they support, it is immediately responded to by the team that supports the person and may include changes in supports that better meet the person's needs, with the intention of preventing a future incident. A public awareness campaign is *very* unlikely to have any impact on reducing violence in these settings due to the unique circumstances of supporting a person with IDD—and there are already mechanisms to immediately address and reduce the occurrence of any such incidents. However, such a campaign that references workplace violence in settings that support people with disabilities could have a very negative impact on hiring at a time when IDD providers are facing the worst staffing crisis in history and could cause further stigmatization of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

MACS respectfully requests the following amendments that would delete references to settings that provide services to people with disabilities:

**On page 2, delete lines 25-26**

**On page 3, line 12, delete "disabilities"**

Respectfully submitted,

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