

Carol A. Beatty, Secretary
Christian J. Miele, Deputy Secretary

Larry Hogan, Governor
Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor



DATE: January 27, 2022
BILL: Senate Bill 169 – State Autism Strategy – Revisions
COMMITTEE: Senate Finance Committee
POSITION: Favorable, Letter of Support

Dear Chair Kelley,

The Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD) is pleased to provide this letter in support of Senate Bill 169, departmental legislation requested by the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives (GOCI).

The purpose of SB169 is to provide additional clarity on the State Coordinator for Autism Strategy position and the Advisory Stakeholder Group on Autism Related Needs.

SB 169 transfers and amends Article – Human Services 13 Section 7–111 and 7–112 to Article – State Government 18 Section 9.5–102 and 9.5–103, aligning the budget appropriation with GOCI, the corresponding state government entity. It also enacts technical amendments improving the administration of the Advisory Stakeholder Group on Autism-Related Needs and subsequent reporting as follows:

- Adding General Assembly membership to the Advisory Stakeholder Group on Autism-Related Needs;
- Changing the annual reporting due date from July to December to ensure the report aligns with related and companion state reporting.
 - A similar change in MDOD's 2017 departmental allowed the department to improve the accuracy and completeness of data provided by state and federal agencies; and
- Amending the Advisory Stakeholder Group administration details (staffing, chair, reporting submission, and publication requirements to more closely align with similar state government advisory groups).

MDOD respectfully requests a favorable report.

If there are any questions, please contact MDOD's Director of Interagency Affairs, Elizabeth Hall, elizabeth.hall2@maryland.gov

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carol A. Beatty". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carol A. Beatty, Secretary