

MICHELE GUYTON
Legislative District 42B
Baltimore County

Ways and Means Committee
Early Childhood Subcommittee
Education Subcommittee



The Maryland House of Delegates
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 24, 2022

SUPPORT - Commission to Study the Division of Rehabilitative Services (Student Job Training Rehabilitation Act)

Dear Madam Chair and Members of the Ways and Means Committee,

I am writing to request a favorable report for HB660 - The Division of Rehabilitative Services Reformation Act. DORS was established in its current form in 1992 and is housed in the Maryland State Department of Education, but has actually been around since 1929 as the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

This is one of the longest lasting initiatives in State Government and has one of the most significant budgets (42% of the MSDE budget) and yet few lawmakers are aware of its existence, its mission or its struggles. DORS has been flying under the radar for a very long time.

The mission of DORS is to assist individuals with disabilities in pre-employment transition services and finding long-term employment.

One main problem with DORS is the inefficiency and extreme waits for services. The DORS 2020 Annual Report states that for that year, 6,124 people were on the waitlist, 318 (5%) moved from the waitlist. The level of disability is supposed to categorize clients into groups for services with three categories. The most significant disabilities are awarded services first while individuals who have been on the waitlist the longest are helped first. The third category, those with "non-severe disabilities," (and who may actually require fewer services to be independently employed are not ever expected to receive services due to the long waitlist. This means that so many individuals who should be eligible are not able to benefit from a rehabilitation program, and are left without these resources.

Another very serious concern is that during the last yearly report, DORS was graduated only 925 individuals to full-time employment and was being funded at a whopping \$352,966.80. That adds up to \$380,588 for EACH client who was successful achieving employment. I do not believe that anyone on this committee will consider this an acceptable return on investment.

The solution that I bring with HB660 is to bring stakeholders to the table to study and make recommendations on many of the primary concerns that have been brought to me by advocates and consumers.

Thank you for your support of HB660. I am aware of several amendments being suggested today and will accept them as friendly amendments.

Sincerely,

Delegate Michele Guyton D42B

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Delegate Michele Guyton".