



HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

3430 Courthouse Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043 ■ 410-313-2013 Voice/Relay

Calvin Ball
Howard County Executive
cball@howardcountymd.gov

www.howardcountymd.gov
FAX 410-313-3051

February 28, 2023

Delegate Joseline Pena-Melnyk, Chair
House Health and Government Operations Committee
House Office Building, Room 241
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: **TESTIMONY OF SUPPORT**: HB 726: Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Autism Waiver - Military Families

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk, Vice Chair Kelly, and Members of the Committee,

I commend Delegate Feldmark and co-sponsors for introducing House Bill 726, a necessary and timely bill to ensure that children remain eligible for autism waivers regardless of military status.

According to the Howard County Autism Society, Howard County has the highest per capita incidence of autism in Maryland. We are dedicated to ensuring residents of all abilities have the resources to not only survive but thrive. Howard County has a strong history of supporting families who have children that are covered under the autism waiver.

Most recently, we provided funding to support Patuxent Commons, which once built will be a national model for providing housing to adults with disabilities, including autism. In addition, we partnered with the Howard County Autism Society to open the first-of-its-kind in the state destination playground that embraces play activities for children with disabilities, including autism.

As County Executive, I am honored to advocate for this legislation, which advances service delivery and eliminates access barriers for people with disabilities, which demonstrates our collective willingness to identify innovative and compassionate ways to be welcoming to all. I welcome your support and urge a favorable report on House Bill 726.

All the Best,

Calvin Ball
Howard County Executive