



DATE: February 28, 2023

BILL: House Bill 1148: Behavioral Health Care - Treatment and Access (Behavioral Health Model for Maryland)

COMMITTEE: House Health and Government Operations Committee

POSITION: Favorable with Amendments

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk,

The Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD) is pleased to be favorable with amendments for House Bill 1148: Behavioral Health Care - Treatment and Access (Behavioral Health Model for Maryland) and respectfully request that the bill be amended to add THE SECRETARY OF DISABILITIES, OR THE SECRETARY'S DESIGNEE to the Commission on Behavioral Health Care Treatment and Access as one of the members.

The Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD) is unique in that it is a cabinet-level state department focused on cross-disability policy. Due to MDOD's cross-disability and cross subject-matter structure MDOD has a strong ability to connect and engage with the various stakeholders on this commission to ensure the work of this bill is achieved. MDOD understands the diverse needs of individuals with disabilities and those with complex care. MDOD's expertise can provide information on challenges and potential gaps in the system for this population. MDOD's Director of Health and Behavioral Health Policy has worked on several commissions of this nature and has been able to provide disability expertise to ensure the policy going forward has a disability lens. Some of the previous commissions the director has participated on are as follows: Lt. Governor Boyd Rutherford's Commission to Study Mental and Behavioral Health in Maryland, the Behavioral Health Advisory Council, the Commission on Suicide Prevention, Maryland's Health Equity Commission, and the Trauma – Informed Care Commission. For these reasons MDOD requests to amend this bill to include the Secretary of Disabilities, or the Secretary's designee.

If you have any questions please contact Elizabeth Hall, Director of Interagency Affairs, (410)767-3652, elizabeth.hall2@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carol A. Beatty".

Carol A. Beatty, Secretary