



## Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

CREATING CHANGE • IMPROVING LIVES

### House Ways and Means Committee

#### HB 1222: State Department of Education – Division of Rehabilitation Services – Funding and Staffing

March 8, 2023

Position: Support

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council (Council) is an independent, public policy organization that creates changes to make it possible for people with developmental disabilities to live the lives they want with the support they need. Our vision is that people with and without disabilities in Maryland live, learn, work, and play together. The Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) is Maryland's vocational rehabilitation program, and receives most of its funding from a grant from the US Department of Education to provide support for people with disabilities to go to work, stay at a job, and prepare for the world of work.

- 7,396 adults (age 25 and older) currently receive employment services from DORS
- 5,589 youth (ages 14-24) currently receive employment services from DORS
- 2,777 people are waiting for these employment services<sup>i</sup>

#### WHAT does this bill do?

- Requires the Governor to include a General Fund (GF) appropriation for the required state match for the federal funds the Division of Rehabilitation Services receives.
- Requires enough funding for DORS to employ 74 new staff members to help reduce the wait list for services, reduce the caseload of current DORS counselors, and expand training and services in community-based settings.

#### WHY is it important?

- **Ensures federal funding.** Funding the state match ensures DORS meetings the federal match requirements each year.
- **Improves service delivery.** Additional staff, specifically DORS counselors, help improve the amount of time it takes to provide critical services.
- **People wait a long time for DORS services.** Additional staff helps expand training and services in community-based settings, and increases accountability of the DORS' programs and services.

For all these reasons, the Council supports HB 1222.

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<sup>i</sup> DORS website, February 20, 2023. < <https://dors.maryland.gov/consumers/about/Pages/numbers.aspx>>