

Education Advocacy Coalition

for Students with Disabilities

HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL 469: CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES—SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES--ELIGIBILITY

DATE: FEBRUARY 15, 2023

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Education Advocacy Coalition for Students with Disabilities (EAC), a coalition of nearly 40 organizations and individuals concerned with education policy for students with disabilities in Maryland supports House Bill 469, which would equalize the years of schooling received by students with disabilities.

Currently, Section 8-403 of the Maryland Education Article guarantees a free appropriate public education available to each student with a disability through the school year in which the student turns 21 years old. However, because local school systems set their own calendars, including the school year start and end date, some students receive up to 15 years of special education and related services, and others receive up to 16 years of services, depending on their birthdate and the local school system calendar. House Bill 469 is designed to remedy this inequity by requiring that special education and related services be available to students with disabilities from birth through the end of the school year in which the student turns 21 or the end of the student's 16th year of school, whichever occurs later. House Bill 469 would ensure that students with disabilities do not get shortchanged critical time needed to plan their transition out of the school system to higher education, employment, or community services.

For these reasons, the Education Advocacy Coalition supports House Bill 469. Please contact Leslie Seid Margolis, Chairperson, at lesliem@disabilityrightsmd.org or 410-370-5730 with questions.

Respectfully submitted,

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