

February 14, 2024

The Honorable Joseline Pena-Melnyk
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
House Office Building, Room 241
Annapolis, Maryland 20401

**RE: TESTIMONY ON HB 215 - Human Services - Attendant Care Program - Ongoing
Additional Supports - POSITION: FAVORABLE**

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk and Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee:

The Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS) thanks the Committee for the opportunity to provide written testimony in favor of House Bill 215 (HB 215).

With offices in every one of Maryland's jurisdictions, we empower Marylanders to reach their full potential by providing preventative and supportive services, economic assistance, and meaningful connections to workforce development and career opportunities. The Social Services Administration within DHS implements the Adult Services programs which are impacted by HB 215.

HB 215 expands the Attendant Care Program administered by the Maryland Department of Disabilities. The Attendant Care Program provides assistance to adults with disabilities to maintain their independence. The program provides financial reimbursement to assist individuals with severe chronic or permanent physical disabilities who require attendant care services to direct their own care and select their own service providers. The bill would positively impact adult clients served by Adult Services programs. Providing supportive services that allow adults to remain in their community is a goal of the Adult Services program. Previously, persons with disabilities living independently were unable to submit reimbursement for delivery fees for groceries, costs of laundry services, and expenses associated with service animals. Expanding the Attendant Care Program will aid persons with disabilities to continue living independently.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide favorable testimony to the Committee for consideration during your deliberations. We look forward to the decision of the Committee and welcome continued collaboration on HB 215.

If you require additional information, please contact Rachel Sledge, Director of Government Affairs, at rachel.sledge@maryland.gov.

In service,



Rafael López
Secretary

