



Erin Ashinghurst

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February 7, 2025

Chair, Appropriations Committee
Representative Ben Barnes
120 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair and Members of the House Appropriations Committee,

I'm writing to share my support for **House Bill 0214**, Human Services - Maryland Assistive Technology Program - Establishment. With years of experience supporting people with disabilities in accessing resources and living more independently, I've seen firsthand how assistive technology is transforming lives.

In my current role at Accessible Resources for Independence, I have worked with hundreds of people with disabilities annually. I've seen how assistive technology—like communication devices, mobility aids, and other tools—can eliminate give our community members the opportunity to live fuller, more independent lives. However, I've also seen how many people struggle to afford or access the essential assistive technology for healthy living. This bill would establish a program to make assistive technology more available and affordable for Marylanders with disabilities. It's a step forward to ensure people have the tools they need to communicate, get around, and fully participate in their communities.

This program is so important because it builds on Maryland's commitment to empower and value each citizen. I've worked on statewide advocacy efforts, and I know how critical it is to invest in programs that directly improve access and opportunities for people with disabilities. I urge the committee to support this bill and help Maryland become a leader in assistive technology access. Thank you for your time and for considering this key step.

Sincerely,

Erin Ashinghurst, MS
Deputy Director of Programs and Services
Accessible Resources for Independence