



March 5, 2025

Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk
Chair, Health and Government Operations Committee
240 Taylor Housing Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: SB945/HB1136 – Community-Based Residential Facilities – Licensing Entities – Provision of Licensing Criteria and Single Point of Contact – Oppose

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of The Arc Central Chesapeake Region, we write in opposition SB945/HB1136 – Community-Based Residential Facilities – Licensing Entities – Provision of Licensing Criteria and Single Point of Contact.

The Arc Central Chesapeake Region serves over 4,000 children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their families in Anne Arundel County and Maryland's Eastern Shore. Our mission is to support people with IDD to live the lives they choose by creating opportunities, promoting respect and equity, and providing access to services.

SB945/HB1136 would require the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) to provide licensing criteria for DDA residential settings to any interested party and designate a point of contact for complaints and concerns. While transparency and accountability in residential services are important, this bill raises concerns about discrimination, privacy, and redundancy.

First, this bill disproportionately targets people with IDD who rely on supported housing to live in their communities. The Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968 guarantees equal access to housing and prohibits discrimination based on protected characteristics. By allowing inquiries into the licensing and operation of specific residences, this bill risks encouraging "Not In My Backyard" (NIMBY) attitudes and discriminatory behavior. Rather than promoting inclusive communities, it could create unnecessary barriers for people who deserve to live with dignity and respect.

Additionally, this bill is redundant. The Office of Health Care Quality (OHCQ) already monitors DDA-licensed providers, investigates complaints, and ensures public access to information about residential settings. Licensing criteria and renewal processes are available on DDA's Partnering with Providers webpage or via a Public Information Act request. With these existing mechanisms in place, this legislation would create unnecessary reporting structures.

For these reasons, we urge the committee to issue an unfavorable report on SB945/HB1136.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Jonathon Rondeau'.

Jonathon Rondeau
President & CEO

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