



MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

March 5, 2025

House Bill 1244

**Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administration Waiver Advisory Council –
Establishment**

House Health and Government Operations Committee

Position: Favorable

The Maryland Catholic Conference (MCC) is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals, and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

House Bill 1244 establishes the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administration Waiver Advisory Council to advise and provide recommendations to the Developmental Disabilities Administration on system design, service delivery, and quality enhancement strategies for the Medicaid waiver programs operated by the Administration.

Developmental disabilities encompass impairments in physical abilities, learning, language, or behavior that emerge during childhood and typically persist throughout a person's life.¹ This legislation prioritizes the well-being of individuals with disabilities by ensuring that Medicaid funds are allocated based on demonstrated needs, rather than solely administrative discretion. By establishing a dedicated council, this legislation would provide a more inclusive and thorough review process within the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA), incorporating diverse perspectives and firsthand experiences. Currently, the DDA determines Medicaid waiver fund recipients without input from key providers, including those represented by the Maryland Association of Community Services (MACS).

Involving key stakeholders in decision-making ensures that funding decisions reflect the needs of those directly impacted. Additionally, this legislation empowers individuals with disabilities to advocate for themselves within their communities. The MCC strongly supports initiatives that enhance the quality of life, equity, and independence of individuals with disabilities, and we believe this measure is a crucial step toward achieving those goals.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/child-development/about/developmental-disability-basics.html>

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference asks for a favorable report on **HB 1244**.

Thank you for your consideration.