



Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Ryan Moran, Dr.PH, Acting Secretary

March 5, 2025

The Honorable Joseline A. Peña-Melnyk  
Chair, Health and Government Operations Committee  
240 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Re: House Bill (HB) 1244 - Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administration Waiver Advisory Council - Establishment - Letter of Information**

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) respectfully submits this letter of information for House Bill (HB) 1244 - Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administration Waiver Advisory Council - Establishment. HB 1244 would partially codify the existing Waiver Advisory Council within the MDH Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA).<sup>1</sup>

The DDA established its Waiver Advisory Council in October 2024 with the goal of creating a forum where individuals with lived experiences—primarily individuals receiving Medicaid waiver services operated by the DDA—could provide direct input for the design and implementation of Medicaid waiver services. To this end, the DDA’s Waiver Advisory Council is designed to feature a majority of members with lived experiences. Additionally, the DDA sought to design its Waiver Advisory Council to mirror the composition and values underlying the future Medicaid Advisory Council and Beneficiary Advisory Council, which are required to be established under the new federal Ensuring Access to Medicaid Services Final Rule (Access Rule).<sup>2</sup>

Further, the DDA sought to align the practices and focus of the DDA’s Waiver Advisory Council (previously as the Quality Advisory Council) with existing Waiver Advisory Councils that support other Medicaid waiver programs in Maryland. No other Waiver Advisory Council in the state is presently codified in state law, as the Department seeks to operate all of its Waiver Advisory Councils in alignment with federal requirements and assurances.

Finally, the DDA sought to emphasize input from organizations and individuals who do not have existing pathways to advocacy within the state. In particular, the current Council includes two

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<sup>1</sup> <https://health.maryland.gov/dda/Pages/Waiver-Advisory-Council.aspx>

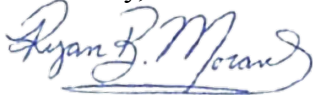
<sup>2</sup> <https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/access-care/medicaid-advisory-committees-and-beneficiary-advisory-councils/index.html>

seats for member organizations of the Maryland Association of Community Services but does not require that the persons holding these seats directly represent the broader association. Additionally, the current Council does not reserve a seat for The Arc Maryland, giving all provider organizations within the state equal consideration.

While HB 1244 bears numerous similarities to the current Waiver Advisory Council Charter,<sup>3</sup> MDH wishes to note that the proposed changes in the Council's membership would result in several current members being removed from the Council. First, the number of seats for Coordination of Community Services providers is reduced from two to one, requiring that either Teresa Michelle Titus-Howard of The Coordinating Center or Caitlin Bishop of Worcester County Health Department is removed from the Council. Second, at least one provider member would be removed to open a seat for The Arc of Maryland, requiring that Karen Lee of SEEC or Matthew Ramsey of Target be removed from the Council. Finally, either Rob Baynard of Opportunities, Inc. or Najla Wortham of Rock Creek Foundation would be required to dually represent both the Maryland Association of Community Services and their own provider organization.

If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Case-Herron, Director of Governmental Affairs, at [sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov](mailto:sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov).

Sincerely,



Ryan Moran, Dr. P.H., MHSA  
Acting Secretary

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<sup>3</sup> <https://health.maryland.gov/dda/Documents/DDA%20Waiver%20Advisory%20Council%20Charter%209-20-24.pdf>