

Carol A. Beatty, Secretary
Anne Blackfield, Deputy Secretary

Wes Moore, Governor
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor



BILL: HB 866

POSITION: FAV - Favorable

COMMITTEE: Education, Energy and the Environment

HEARING DATE: March 26, 2026

SUBMITTED BY: Maryland Department of Disabilities

217 East Redwood Street, Suite 1300, Baltimore, MD 21202

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Committee Members,

The Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD) is pleased to submit this letter of support for **HB 866, Workgroup for the Deaf, Deafblind, and Hard of Hearing – Extension.**

This legislation extends the termination date and reporting deadline for the Workgroup for the Deaf, Deafblind, and Hard of Hearing, which was originally established by Chapters 442 and 443 of the Acts of 2024. Specifically, the bill extends the deadline for the workgroup to submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly to Dec 01, 2028. It also extends the workgroup's operations through Dec 31, 2028.

The extension is necessary to allow the workgroup sufficient time to continue and complete its comprehensive study and assessment of relevant State programs, policies, and engagement activities. MDOD believes this extension is vital to ensuring the workgroup can produce thoughtful and data-driven recommendations that will improve the delivery of services to all of Maryland's Deafblind, Deaf, and Hard of Hearing residents.

Thank you for your consideration. MDOD respectfully requests **a favorable report on HB 866.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carol A. Beatty". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carol A. Beatty
Secretary, Maryland Department of Disabilities