



MARYLAND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COALITION

Dedicated to the rights and quality of life for people with developmental disabilities in Maryland

Senate Finance Committee

March 3, 2026

SB721: Developmental Disabilities Administration – Services – Eligibility for Recently Relocated People (Ralph’s Act)

Position: **Support**



The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Coalition (DD Coalition) is comprised of five statewide organizations that are committed to improving the opportunities and outcomes for Marylanders with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). As such, the DD Coalition supports SB 721 (Ralph’s Act) to ensure continuity of services for people with developmental disabilities who must relocate to Maryland following the death or loss of a primary caregiver.



WHAT does this legislation do?

- Requires that people who received home and community-based developmental disabilities services in another state for at least 10 years, and who are moving to Maryland to live with a family member after the death or loss of a parent or primary caregiver, be eligible for services from the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA).
- Requires the DDA to issue an eligibility decision within 30 days.
- If determined eligible, places the person on the DDA Waiting List in the Crisis Resolution Category.



WHY is this legislation important?

- The death or loss of a parent or primary caregiver is one of the most disruptive events in a person’s life. For people with significant support needs, this loss can also mean the immediate loss of housing, daily supports, and stability.
- Sometimes the only other available caregiver is a sibling or other family member who lives in Maryland. Families should not have to step in to support for their loved one and face a long, uncertain process to see if their loved one may or may not get DDA services.
- These situations are rare, urgent, and often traumatic.
- A clear 30-day eligibility determination provides predictability and stability. Placement in the Crisis Resolution Category appropriately recognizes the urgency of these circumstances while maintaining the structure of Maryland’s existing DDA Waiting List.



Ralph’s Act reflects a compassionate and practical response to families facing extraordinary circumstances. It ensures that people who have long relied on home and community-based services in another state are not left without a pathway to support when they must relocate to Maryland due to the loss of a caregiver. For these reasons, the DD Coalition strongly supports SB 721.