

Hello esteemed members of the Maryland legislature,

I would like to take a moment to touch on the importance of the Medicaid Waiver for members of Maryland's disabled community.

I have worked for Maryland Community Connection, a service provider, for fourteen years. In that time I have witnessed many individuals uplift themselves and attain their goal of having a paying job in their community, engaging with their peers and getting on the road to independence. These stories would not have been possible without Medicaid coverage.

The Medicaid Waiver allows for tangible and material improvements in the lives of those we serve. Individuals who are sadly often overlooked and undervalued rely upon these services to become fully-realized, contributing, members of their communities enriching them and Maryland as a whole through their hard work and contributions. I have individuals now who have to endure not only the negative biases in society but also a lack of insurance which further strains their resources and delays their journey to financial independence.

It would be an act of cruelty to put additional hurdles in the path of those who work so hard to attain that which comes easy to some of us.