



DATE: March 3, 2026 COMMITTEE: Senate Finance
BILL NO: Senate Bill 721
BILL TITLE: DDA - Services - Eligibility for Recently Relocated Individuals (Ralph's Act)
POSITION: Support

Kennedy Krieger Institute supports Senate Bill 721 - Developmental Disabilities Administration - Services - Eligibility for Recently Relocated Individuals (Ralph's Act).

Bill Summary:

This bill specifies that individuals who received home and community-based services, or similar services, in another state, must be eligible to receive those services from the Maryland Department of Health (MDH). MDH is responsible for establishing an expedited process to determine an individual's eligibility.

Background:

Kennedy Krieger provides specialized services to patients nationally and internationally. Kennedy Krieger Institute is dedicated to improving the lives of children and young adults with developmental, behavioral, cognitive and physical challenges. Kennedy Krieger's services include inpatient, outpatient, school-based and community-based programs.

The Maryland Center for Developmental Disabilities (MCDD) at Kennedy Krieger is proud to be Maryland's designated University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service (UCEDD) and a member of the national Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD).

MCDD links the community to vital services, research and information to improve the lives of people with disabilities. Our mission is to provide leadership that advances the inclusion of people with intellectual, developmental and other disabilities through interdisciplinary preservice preparation, continuing education and training; research and evaluation; community service and technical assistance; and product development and information dissemination.

Rationale:

Allowing individuals who were previously eligible in another state to remain eligible upon moving to Maryland helps prevent service disruptions that can destabilize individuals and families during relocation. Ensuring immediate access to needed support minimizes interruptions in daily living, employment, and medical or therapeutic services, all of which are essential for maintaining independence and well-being. The expedited 30-day determination process further reduces delays that can lead to financial strain, caregiver burnout, and regression in critical skills. By honoring prior eligibility decisions and promoting timely evaluations, this policy supports continuity of care, equity, and smoother transitions for those relying on these essential services.

Kennedy Krieger requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 721.