

Chair and Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Rae Bailey. I am the mother of two adult sons, Patrick and Nai'm. While my testimony today centers on Nai'm, who receives services through Maryland's Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA), both of my sons are deeply impacted by the systems that support individuals with disabilities and their families.

For families like mine, DDA services are not optional enhancements — they are essential. They provide stability, safety, structure, and the opportunity for individuals with disabilities to live with dignity and meaningful inclusion in their communities.

Nai'm relies on these services to access the support he needs to thrive. These supports do not just affect him as an individual; they directly impact our entire family's ability to function, work, plan for the future, and maintain stability. When DDA services are strong, families are stronger. When they are uncertain or underfunded, the entire community suffers.

Direct support professionals and service providers are the backbone of this system. They perform highly skilled, deeply human work. Reductions that affect compensation or stability within this workforce do not exist on paper alone — they translate into turnover, disruption of trusted relationships, and instability for individuals who depend on consistency.

For families navigating disability services, consistency is not a luxury. It is foundational.

I am here not only as a mother, but as part of a broader Maryland community that relies on DDA services every day. We are asking for thoughtful, sustainable funding decisions that protect the integrity of this system and the dignity of those it serves.

Our loved ones deserve stability. Our families deserve partnership. And Maryland deserves a system that reflects its stated commitment to inclusion and care.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Gratitude & Kindness,
Rae Bailey