



**TESTIMONY FOR SB0721 – Developmental Disabilities Administration – Services – Eligibility for Recently Relocated Individuals (Ralph’s Act) – FAVORABLE**

**Bill Sponsor: Senator Waldstreicher**

**Committee: Senate Finance**

**Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition**

**Person Submitting: Jessica Gorski, Executive Committee**

**Position: FAVORABLE**

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jessica Gorski, and I am submitting this testimony in strong support of SB0721 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. We are a statewide coalition of grassroots organizations representing more than 30,000 Marylanders across every legislative district. Our mission is to promote legislation that strengthens education, healthcare, public safety, environmental protection, and social justice—ensuring that every Marylander has access to the resources and opportunities needed to thrive.

SB0721 directly advances that mission by ensuring continuity of care for individuals with developmental disabilities who relocate to Maryland. The bill requires that individuals who were previously determined eligible for developmental disability services in another state remain eligible to continue receiving those services here. It also directs the Department to establish an expedited process—within 30 days—to determine whether an individual meets Maryland’s criteria for services.

These provisions are both practical and urgently needed.

**Families often relocate to Maryland for work, caregiving, or stability, and individuals with developmental disabilities cannot afford gaps in essential services. Without continuity, they face disruptions in daily supports, employment assistance, housing stability, and community integration. SB0721 prevents these harmful interruptions by ensuring that Maryland recognizes prior eligibility determinations and acts swiftly to confirm service access.**

By requiring an expedited review process, the bill reduces administrative delays that can leave families without support for months. This is especially critical for individuals

who rely on consistent, structured services to maintain health, independence, and quality of life. SB0721 also promotes fairness and transparency by ensuring that Maryland's developmental disability system is responsive to the needs of newly arrived residents.

SB0721 reflects a compassionate, equity-centered approach to disability services. Individuals with developmental disabilities and their families already navigate complex systems and significant daily challenges. Ensuring they do not lose access to essential services when they cross state lines affirms Maryland's commitment to dignity, inclusion, and community-based support.

SB0721 aligns squarely with the mission of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. It strengthens public health, supports families, and promotes equitable access to critical services across the state. By ensuring continuity of care for recently relocated individuals, this legislation reinforces Maryland's commitment to building a more inclusive and supportive community for all residents.

We urge the Committee to support this thoughtful, necessary, and family-centered legislation.

Thank you for your time and consideration. **We respectfully urge a FAVORABLE report on SB0721.**