

## **Testimony in Support of SB 583(with Adaptations)**

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Middle River, Maryland

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Carin Smith, and I live in Middle River, Maryland. My daughter, Ellie, is 28 years old and has significant developmental disabilities. She lives in a home in her community(Parkville) and self-directs her services with assistance.

Senator Jennings, thank you for sponsoring Senate Bill 583 I strongly support this bill with amendments and respectfully ask that it be expanded to include all Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) policies and all individuals served under the waiver.

Over the past year and a half, families like ours have experienced ongoing chaos due to constant changes within DDA. Policies have been altered or dropped with little to no notice. These abrupt changes have created instability in my daughter's program and for the staff who support her every day.

Recent changes to healthcare reimbursement policies for direct support staff and the severe reduction in Day-to-Day Administration services have resulted in the loss of critical services and valued staff members. This instability not only impacts Ellie's quality of life and well-being but also affects the professionals who are dedicated to supporting her. DDA has made it a habit of making changes that impact people's lives without even talking to the people whose lives they impact. We're asking for your help in fixing the problem because we have repeatedly begged DDA to not do this and have been unsuccessful.

In addition, these sudden policy shifts have created confusion and significantly increased

the number of hours worked by her Coordinator of Community Services, her Support Broker, and her Fiscal Management company. This inefficiency ultimately results in taxpayer dollars being spent ineffectively — the very opposite of what we all want.

I respectfully ask each of you to hear our community's plea and support SB 583 , with the necessary adaptations to protect all individuals served by DDA. Please help stop policies that unintentionally harm Maryland's most vulnerable citizens and instead ensure stability, transparency, and accountability moving forward.

Thank you for your time and consideration.