

SB022. The Arc Maryland. Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Ande Kolp

Position: FAV



The Arc Maryland
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SB0022: Department of Disabilities –
Housing Programs and Affiliated Foundations – Establishment
Senate Finance Committee
January 28, 2026
Position: Support

The Arc Maryland is a statewide training, support, and advocacy organization that is dedicated to advancing and preserving the rights and quality of lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.

This bill modernizes the charter of the Maryland Department of Disabilities to ensure the scope of the work of the Department is properly acknowledged, and creates a pathway for financial sustainment for the Department. Among its many valuable programs, the Department operates a highly successful and necessary accessible and affordable housing program for people with disabilities, and also provides support and assistance to thousands of Marylanders to access technology devices to enhance their independence to live, learn, work, and recreate in their communities. All of their programs are vital for people in Maryland with disabilities, and a model for other states.

With Federal policy and funding volatility, initiatives and programs designed to support people with disabilities, and safety net services and supports have been repeatedly threatened. It is therefore necessary to consider how we may build internal systems, such as the creation of affiliated foundations, to secure additional financial resources, and ultimately ensure outside pressures do not disrupt the vital services and supports needed by people with disabilities.

We appreciate the Maryland Department of Disabilities for all they do, and in particular, our beloved Secretary of the Department for her devotion to equity and access for all people.

We respectfully ask for a favorable report on SB0022.

Ande Kolp, Executive Director
www.thearcmd.org

Maryland Catholic Conference_FAV_SB22.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Diane Arias

Position: FAV



MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

January 28, 2026

Senate Bill 22
Department of Disabilities - Housing Programs and Affiliated Foundations -
Establishment
Senate Finance Committee

Position: Favorable

The Maryland Catholic Conference (MCC) is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals, and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

Senate Bill 22 requires the Department of Disabilities to establish affordable and accessible housing programs; authorizing the Department to establish one or more affiliated foundations to work with certain programs and units of the Department to solicit and accept funds, partner with individuals and entities, and promote certain activities that support certain projects; and requiring the Department by September 1 each year to report to the Governor, the Legislative Policy Committee and the Ethics Commission certain information related to the programs.

This legislation is necessary because people with disabilities face disproportionately high housing and living costs, which affect their ability to remain stable and thrive in the community. Nationwide, people with disabilities are more likely to be low-income and rent-burdened—paying a large share of their income toward housing—while also needing accessible features that add to overall costs.¹ In Maryland, individuals with disabilities represent about 11% of the population, yet there are only a limited number of subsidized accessible rental units, highlighting a gap between need and supply.² High housing costs combined with additional disability-related expenses can strain household budgets, making financial stability and independent living more difficult without targeted support.

Affordable and accessible housing is not just a matter of cost; it is essential for equity and inclusion. The lack of quality, accessible housing contributes to housing instability and increases the risk of homelessness among people with disabilities. Nearly half of unhoused individuals

¹ https://mih-inc.org/housing-info/housing-accessibility/?utm_source

² https://www.disabilitybelongs.org/2025/11/houselessness-disability-community/?utm_source

nationwide live with a disability, demonstrating how housing insecurity and disability are deeply connected.³ Accessible housing that meets the needs of people with mobility, sensory, or cognitive challenges is critical for safe, independent living and full participation in community life.

By establishing and supporting foundation-linked housing programs, Senate Bill 22 promotes equity in access to housing for people with disabilities. These programs can help close the gap between the number of accessible units and the number of individuals who need them, reduce cost burdens on households with disabilities, and ensure that individuals and families can live in communities where they can work, learn, and thrive. This legislation acknowledges that housing stability and accessibility are foundational to dignity, opportunity, and long-term well-being for Marylanders with disabilities.

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference asks for a favorable report on **SB 22**.

Thank you for your consideration.

³ https://mih-inc.org/housing-info/housing-accessibility/?utm_source

SB 22 - State Board_MSDE - SUPPORT.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Donna Gunning

Position: FAV

TO: Senate Finance Committee

BILL: Senate Bill (SB) 22 – Department of Disabilities – Housing Programs and Affiliated Foundations – Establishment

DATE: January 28, 2026

POSITION: Support

The Maryland State Board of Education (State Board) and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) would like to share the following information in support of the Maryland Department of Disabilities’ bill, **SB 22**.

This legislation would authorize the Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD) to establish an affiliated foundation to pursue grants and public-private partnerships in support of critical disability-focused initiatives.

The Board and MSDE strongly support the intent of this legislation, particularly its focus on expanding resources for assistive technology, housing, and employment programs for Marylanders with disabilities. These priorities are closely aligned with the mission of MSDE’s Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) to ensure equitable access, opportunity, and outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

The establishment of this foundation would allow MDOD to secure resources for the Office of Disability Employment Advancement and Policy, which was created as part of the “Model Employer Act” (HB502/SB233) during the 2025 legislative session. MSDE-DORS has been a long-time partner with MDOD in advancing the employment of Marylanders with disabilities and will continue to collaborate in furthering this important work.

Passage of Senate Bill 22 will provide a pathway for the State to leverage philanthropic investment, federal grants, and private-sector partnerships to supplement public funding and expand the reach and impact of existing programs, without increasing the burden on the State’s General Fund. This additional flexibility will be essential as Maryland works to scale innovative strategies and better serve individuals with disabilities and their families.

The State Board and the Department request that the committee consider this information as it deliberates **SB 22**. Please contact Laurel Cratsley, Interim Executive Director of Government Affairs, at laurel.cratsley@maryland.gov or at (443) 571-5461, or Zach Hands, Executive Director of the State Board, at zachary.hands1@maryland.gov, if you would like any additional information.

SB0022_DHCD_Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Jake Day

Position: FAV



WES MOORE
Governor
ARUNA MILLER
Lt. Governor
JACOB R. DAY
Secretary
JULIA GLANZ
Deputy Secretary

DATE: January 28, 2026
BILL NO.: Senate Bill 22
TITLE: Department of Disabilities - Housing Programs and Affiliated Foundations - Establishment
COMMITTEE: Senate Finance Committee

Letter of Support

Description of Bill:

Senate Bill 22 would authorize the Maryland Department of Disabilities to establish one or more independent, non-governmental foundations to support their programs. One of their programs impacted by this bill is their Affordable Apartments Program.

Background and Analysis:

The Department of Disabilities' Affordable Apartments Program sought to house non-elderly, disabled persons at 10-30 percent of the Area's Gross Median Income. Capital grants were available to owners as an incentive to designate units for occupancy at affordable rents specifically for low-income persons with disabilities. However, as the private sponsorship of the program ended, the program was not able to expand beyond its current capacity.

The establishment of nonprofits to support the Department of Disabilities' programs, like the Affordable Apartments Program, is essential to providing the necessary funding for housing for people with disabilities in the State. Oftentimes, the cost of construction to have a project meet accessibility standards is too expensive for developers. Programs like this give developers the incentive, through the capital grants, to build the types of housing that Marylanders need.

With the passage of this legislation, valuable programs like the Affordable Apartments Program can continue to expand to meet the needs of the State by offering more affordable units to Maryland residents who live with a disability.

DHCD Position

The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development respectfully requests a **favorable** report on SB 22.



SB22_Fello_FAV

Uploaded by: Jonathon Rondeau

Position: FAV

January 28, 2026

Chair Pamela Beidle
Senate Finance Committee
3 East Miller Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SB22/HB226 – Department of Disabilities - Housing Programs and Affiliated Foundations - Establishment

Dear Chair Beidle and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Fello, we write in support of ***SB22/HB226 – Department of Disabilities - Housing Programs and Affiliated Foundations – Establishment.***

Across Maryland, Fello is building communities where people belong. With a team of more than 650 employees, Fello supports over 5,000 people with disabilities each year – creating opportunities that empower people to live the lives they choose. From advancing equity and respect to expanding access and connection, inclusion is at the heart of everything we do. One powerful way this comes to life is through Fello Communities: beautiful, safe, and accessible rental housing that offers choice and stability for residents across income levels, from affordable to market-rate homes.

SB22/HB226 authorizes the Maryland Department of Disabilities to develop affordable and accessible housing programs for people with disabilities and to establish affiliated nonprofit foundations to support these initiatives, while also increasing awareness of and access to employment, education, housing, transportation, recreation, health care, and other aspects of daily life. The bill allows these foundations to raise funds, promote programs, and expand services, while requiring ethical guidelines, conflict-of-interest safeguards, annual reporting, and independent audits to ensure transparency and accountability, supplementing state funding.

SB22/HB226 addresses critical housing needs, fosters public-private partnerships to extend program reach, and strengthens oversight to ensure responsible resource management, representing an important step toward expanding housing access and equity for Marylanders with disabilities.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge a favorable report on SB22/HB226.

Sincerely,


Jonathon Rondeau

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President & CEO

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Approve SB 22 testimony 01 26 26 .pdf

Uploaded by: Karen Holcomb

Position: FAV

Testimony in SUPPORT of Senate Bill 0022 (HB0226) submitted on January 26,2026

**Department of Disabilities -Housing Programs and Affiliated Foundations-Establishment
Finance Committee Hearing January 28, 2026 at 2:PM**

To Chair Beidle, Vice -Chair Hayes, and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to **SUPPORT for SB22/HB 0226 on behalf of Chimes as a volunteer Board member of Chimes International and the Chimes Maryland Advisory Council.**

Chimes mission is to foster a compassionate and inclusive community where individuals of differing abilities and behavioral health needs are supported and thrive. Chimes enables futures by providing holistic support, advocacy, and innovative solutions that enhance independence, well -being and a sense of belonging.

Chimes Maryland as the largest not-for profit provider of community services in the state supports children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, autism, and other co-occurring conditions throughout the Baltimore metropolitan region. Committed to helping each individual reach their fullest potential, Chimes offers a diverse array of services tailored to every stage of life.

SB 22's inclusion of the Affordable and Accessible Housing Programs under the Department of Disabilities is an important first step in addressing this issue. The collaborative effort between an affiliated foundation established for this purpose to solicit and receive contributions from business, governmental entities, nonprofit organization, and individuals interested in the promotion of programs and units administered or by the Department provides an innovative supplemental funding mechanism.

SB 22 does an excellent job of outlining the expectations, responsibilities and financial accountability of the affiliate foundation, the Department and the Attorney General while clearly defining that “ **Contributions accepted by the Department from an affiliated foundations under this section are supplemental to and are not intended to take the place of funding that otherwise would be appropriated in the annual budget or capital budget bill for the Department.**”

Thank you for your consideration and **the Chimes urges a favorable report from this committee for SB0022.**

**Karen Holcomb
9822 Fairlee Cove Drive
Chestertown, Maryland 21620**

SB0022 support SEEC.pdf

Uploaded by: Katrina Kugel

Position: FAV



1300 Spring St
Suite 400
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Phone: 301.576.9000
www.SEECOnline.org

SB0022: Department of Disabilities - Housing Programs and Affiliated Foundations – Establishment

Position: Favorable

Hearing date: January 28, 2026

Committee: Senate Finance

On behalf of SEEC, a community provider of services to adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), we encourage a favorable report on SB0022.

By adding affordable and accessible **housing** programs as an official responsibility of the Department of Disabilities as well as supporting access to **technology** and **employment**, as well as other programs by establishing affiliated foundations, this bill will increase the independence and community participation by people with disabilities. From our experience of supporting over 300 adults with I/DD we know firsthand the importance of these programs so people can direct their lives with dignity, choice, authority, and responsibility within their own communities.

One of the main tenets of the 1999 Olmstead Supreme Court case is that people with disabilities have the right to live in the most integrated, community-based setting as possible and not forced to live in institutions. The right of people with disabilities to choose where they live can only be achieved with a reliable, affordable, and accessible **housing supply**. Adding affordable and accessible housing programs as an official responsibility of the Department of Disabilities will help ensure that people with I/DD have more choice and freedom when it comes to where they live.

As Sizhe, someone we support stated, I have the housing supports through Jubilee, a community provider. I moved out of my parents house September of last year. I have two roommates and I live at Main Street, affordable housing for people with disabilities (25%) and neurotypical people (75%).

The ability to choose accessible, integrated housing in one's community means dignity, choice, and authority for all people, including those with I/DD.

At SEEC, **assistive technology** is another critical vehicle to reject ableism and reinforce choice, autonomy, and dignity for the people we support. The Department of Disabilities has been a valued partner in this initiative. This is not about fitting people to technology, it is about creating an inviting process led by the people we support and finding the right mix of high- and low-tech so they can build their own resources to communicate, be independent and included.

Robert, supported by SEEC, shared that technology is critical for his success at work. He does not communicate in a typical manner so his team communicates virtually using TEAMS and Robert also uses his iPad or the notes function on his phone when he converses with coworkers. Instead of using the call function on his phone to communicate with applicants, Robert emails them. Anything that he would normally handwrite such as an invoice number or signature on a purchase order, he makes labels for instead.

His Director stated that Robert is such a friendly and social person, and that he just suits the human resources department so well and he is an active and valuable member on the team. When asked about what

he likes most about his job Robert responded that he likes making money, learning new skills all the time, and giving a hand with office tasks. He also started a retirement account.

At SEEC, we believe **meaningful employment** is a cornerstone for people belonging in their community. With the support of the Department of Disabilities, people with disabilities can discover their passions and prepare for meaningful roles in the workplace. The results speak for themselves: businesses partnering with SEEC report increased workplace productivity and morale, while job seekers gain independence, confidence, and a sense of belonging. It is not only about not just matching people with their ideal jobs, but also transforming lives and shaping more opportunities for everyone.

We believe in the power of alliance and the Maryland Department of Disabilities is one of our most valuable partners. This bill will increase opportunities and independence for people we support and we urge its passage. Thank you.

Warmly,
Karen Lee, CEO
Katrina Emmerson Kugel, Government Relations Manager

SB22 - LOS MD Labor.pdf

Uploaded by: Lauren Gilwee

Position: FAV

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF LABOR TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 22

TO: Finance Committee Members
FROM: Maryland Department of Labor (MD Labor)
DATE: January 28, 2026
BILL: Department of Disabilities- Housing Programs and Affiliated
Foundations- Establishment

MD LABOR POSITION: SUPPORT

SB22 requires the Department of Disabilities to establish affordable and accessible housing programs. To do so, the Department may establish one or more foundations to work with the Maryland Assistive Technology Program, the Assistive Technology Guaranteed Loan Program, the Office of Disability Employment Advancement and Policy, and the Department's Affordable and Accessible Housing Programs. The goal of these foundations is to enhance accessible information technology, effective use of assistive technology, and environmental adaptations that promote the ability of individuals with disabilities to participate in employment, affordable and accessible housing, and other aspects of daily life.

The Maryland Department of Labor (MD Labor) supports SB22's goal of establishing foundations and programs that enhance the ability of individuals with disabilities to participate in employment and accessible, affordable housing. MD Labor's Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning's (DWDAL) mission is to ensure businesses have the skilled workforce they need to compete in the global marketplace, and to build a strong pipeline of qualified workers by reaching jobseekers – especially individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities

DWDAL has a Disability and Youth Services Coordinator who supports workforce development activities across the State for individuals with disabilities. The Coordinator who currently works closely with the Department of Disabilities would be able to work with the foundations formed by SB22. MD Labor is committed to working with the Department of Disabilities to increase access to job training services for individuals with disabilities, ensuring that *all* Marylanders have access to pathways to family-sustaining careers that MD Labor's services offer.

The Department respectfully requests a favorable report on SB 22. For questions, please contact Andrew Fulginiti at Andrew.Fulginiti@maryland.gov.

Maryland SILC Support for SB22-MDOD.pdf

Uploaded by: Lorna-Mae Silcott

Position: FAV

Testimony in SUPPORT of SB 22 / HB 226

Department of Disabilities – Affiliated Foundation – Establishment

To: Honorable Members of the Senate Finance / House Health and Government Operations Committees
From: Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council Date: January 26, 2026

The Opportunity: Innovation Without Taxpayer Burden

SB 22 / HB 226 offers a fiscally responsible solution to expand essential services for Marylanders with disabilities. By authorizing the Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD) to establish an independent, non-profit foundation, this bill bridges the gap between private-sector capital and public-sector needs.

The Problem: The "Funding Ceiling"

Currently, Maryland's disability programs rely heavily on fluctuating federal grants and limited state general funds.

- **The Barrier:** Philanthropists and corporate partners are eager to invest but require the transparency and tax-deductible structure of a formal foundation.
- **The Consequence:** Without this bill, Maryland continues to leave significant private investment on the table.

Four Pillars of Impact

The foundation will create a sustainable, permanent funding stream for four critical areas of independence:

1. **Assistive Technology (MDTAP):** Protecting equipment lending libraries from rising costs to ensure students and workers have the tools to succeed.
2. **Low-Interest Loans (ATLP):** Increasing capacity for adapted vehicles and home modifications beyond current state funding limits.
3. **Employment (ODEAP):** Strengthening the "State as a Model Employer" (SAME) initiative through private-sector workforce partnerships.
4. **Accessible Housing:** Revitalizing the Affordable Apartments Program to create more integrated housing options via private collaboration.

A Proven, Cost-Neutral Model

This legislation is not an experiment; it follows a successful Maryland blueprint used by the Department of Natural Resources and the Maryland Stadium Authority.

- **Zero Fiscal Impact:** The foundation is self-supporting, utilizing private donations and grants.
- **Efficiency:** It allows the State to do more for its citizens with less administrative overhead.

Conclusion

SB 22 / HB 226 moves Maryland from a reactive posture to a proactive one. It builds a permanent infrastructure of support that is resilient to federal budget cuts and anchored by community investment.

The Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council urges a FAVORABLE report on SB 22 / HB 226.

Respectfully submitted, Lorna-Mae Silcott *Executive Director*

Maryland SILC Support for SB22-MDOD.pdf

Uploaded by: Lorna-Mae Silcott

Position: FAV



Department of Disabilities – Affiliated Foundation – Establishment

To: Honorable Members of the Senate Finance / House Health and Government Operations Committees From: Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council Date: January 26, 2026

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Uploaded by: Lorna-Mae Silcott

Position: FAV



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Respectfully submitted, Lorna-Mae Silcott *Executive Director*

SB22 - MDOD Departmental.pdf

Uploaded by: Mary Manzoni

Position: FAV



Proposed Legislation-2026 Session

Department of Disabilities - Housing Programs and Affiliated Foundations - Establishment
SB22/HB226

Summary

This bill would authorize the Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD) to establish one or more independent, non-government foundations to support its programs. These foundations could raise funds, apply for grants, and form private partnerships to benefit MDOD initiatives that support assistive technology, employment, and affordable housing for people with disabilities.

Fiscal Note

There is NO COST for this legislation. MDOD will create the affiliated foundation using existing resources. The affiliated foundation will then be self-supporting.

Background

This proposed bill is modeled on successful legislation submitted by the Department of Natural Resources, HB 717 (2025). The legislation is also based on other relatively recent examples in State law, such as Stadium Authority's affiliated foundation, which was created under HB 1619 (2017).

Problem Solved

MDOD has identified four programs that need funding for sustainability or growth and are strong candidates for public-private partnerships. While MDOD actively seeks grants and partnerships, affiliated foundations would gain greater access to fundraising, private grants, and innovative collaboration opportunities if this legislation is enacted.



For more information : **Anne Blackfield, Deputy Secretary**
email: anne.blackfield1@maryland.gov



The programs and units of MDOD that would work with the affiliated foundation(s) are:

Maryland Technology Assistance Program (MDTAP)



The Maryland Assistive Technology Program (MDTAP) provides assistive technology lending libraries for people with disabilities, especially for education and employment. Fully funded by a federal grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration on Community Living, MDTAP has faced rising costs and uncertain future funding. This has limited its ability to expand or update its libraries.

Assistive Technology Guaranteed Loan Program (ATLP)



The Assistive Technology Guaranteed Loan Program (ATLP) offers low-interest loans to people with disabilities for assistive technology or adapted vehicles to support education or employment. Funded by repayments and interest, ATLP's growth is limited due to its low-interest model. While it has received federal grants from ACL, the future of this support is uncertain.

Office of Disability Employment Advancement and Policy (ODEAP)



The Office of Disability Employment Advancement and Policy (ODEAP), established by the General Assembly in 2025 as part of the Model Employer Act (HB 502), will lead the State as a Model Employer (SAME) initiative to improve hiring and retention of people with disabilities in State government. Philanthropists have shown interest in supporting this effort but prefer donating to a non-governmental entity for tax reasons.

Affordable Apartments Program



The Affordable Apartments Program, which was started by a partnership with the Weinberg Foundation to provide integrated, affordable, and accessible units to people with disabilities. The private partnerships with the Weinberg Foundation ended, preventing the programs from expanding beyond their current capacity.



For more information : **Anne Blackfield, Deputy Secretary**
email: anne.blackfield1@maryland.gov

POG_Testimony_SB22.pdf

Uploaded by: Mat Rice

Position: FAV



People On the Go Maryland

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF

Senate Bill 22 (SB 22) / House Bill 226 (HB 226)

"Department of Disabilities – Housing Programs and Affiliated Foundations – Establishment"

Primary Sponsor: Chair, Finance Committee (By Request – Departmental – Disabilities)

Committee: Finance Committee

Hearing Date and Time: January 28 at 2:00 p.m.

POSITION: FAVORABLE

To the Honorable Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

People On the Go Maryland (POG) is a statewide self advocacy/systems advocacy organization run for and by people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. Our mission is to empower individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities to speak for themselves, make their own decisions, and live the lives they choose in their communities. We represent the voices of Marylanders with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities who seek independence, dignity, and the fundamental right to live in communities of their choice.

The Housing Crisis Facing Marylanders with Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities

People with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities in Maryland and across the nation face a severe and multifaceted housing crisis. Adults with disabilities experience poverty at more than twice the rate of their non-disabled peers, with many relying on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) as their primary source of income. The maximum federal SSI benefit of just \$914 per month is insufficient to afford a one-bedroom apartment at fair market rent in any state in the United States, even if 100% of the benefit were allocated to housing costs.

This financial precarity is compounded by a critical shortage of accessible housing. The United States faces a national deficit of over 7 million affordable housing units. For people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, this shortage is even more acute: less than 5% of housing nationwide is accessible for individuals with moderate mobility difficulties, and less than 1% is accessible for wheelchair users. As a result, an estimated 7 million renters with disabilities are moderately or severely cost-burdened, spending over 30% of their income on rent and placing them at high risk of eviction.

The convergence of low incomes and a lack of suitable housing places many people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities at imminent risk of homelessness or unnecessary institutionalization. Nearly 25% of the more than 580,000 people experiencing homelessness on any given night in the U.S. have a disability. When individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities become homeless, they struggle to navigate fragmented support systems, increasing their vulnerability. Simultaneously, the housing shortage forces many into institutional settings like nursing homes or large congregate facilities against their will, stripping them of their independence and violating their civil rights.

The Proven Benefits of Community-Based Housing and Integration

A robust body of research demonstrates that community-based housing provides far superior outcomes for people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities compared to institutional settings. Studies consistently show that community living leads to improved quality of life, greater autonomy and personal choice, enhanced social integration, increased independence, and better overall health outcomes.

People with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities who live in community-based settings develop broader social networks, more personal relationships, and greater participation in community activities. They experience increased self-determination and control over their daily lives, from choosing what they eat to deciding how they spend their time. This empowerment is a critical component of dignity and mental health. Research has documented that moving from institutions to community residences is associated with increased independence and a decrease in maladaptive behaviors. Smaller-scale residential communities are better equipped to provide person-centered support that adapts to each individual's unique and changing needs.

Moreover, housing is a critical social determinant of health. Stable, affordable, and accessible housing is directly linked to improved physical and mental health outcomes. The "Housing First" model, which provides immediate access to permanent housing with voluntary supportive services,

has been proven to significantly increase housing stability, reduce homelessness, improve quality of life and clinical health indicators, and reduce costly emergency department visits and hospitalizations.

The Legal Imperative: Olmstead v. L.C. and the Integration Mandate

The right to live in the community is not merely a preference but a fundamental civil right. The U.S. Supreme Court's landmark 1999 decision in *Olmstead v. L.C.* established that the unjustified segregation of people with disabilities in institutions constitutes discrimination prohibited by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The Court held that states must provide services in the most integrated setting appropriate to an individual's needs.

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg powerfully articulated that institutional confinement "perpetuates unwarranted assumptions that persons so isolated are incapable or unworthy of participating in community life." This integration mandate is not optional—it is a constitutional requirement. However, the promise of *Olmstead* remains unfulfilled for many. In 2023, an estimated 692,000 people, primarily individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, were on waiting lists for Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services waivers. These long waiting lists effectively trap individuals in institutions or leave them without necessary support in the community, undermining both the spirit and letter of the law.

Senate Bill 22 directly addresses this gap by mandating that the Department of Disabilities establish housing programs, elevating housing to a core statutory requirement. This legislation is essential to ensuring that Maryland complies with its *Olmstead* obligations and upholds the civil rights of all its citizens with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.

The Essential Role of Affiliated Foundations in Sustainable Funding

The creation of affordable and accessible housing requires substantial and sustained investment. While government funding is essential, it is often insufficient to meet the scale of need. Affiliated foundations provide a vital mechanism to supplement public resources, foster innovation, and create sustainable funding streams.

Philanthropic foundations play an indispensable role in the disability housing ecosystem. Nationally, over 1,250 foundations actively fund independent housing for people with disabilities, holding collective assets of approximately \$879 billion. These foundations support diverse activities, from grants for construction of new affordable housing to funding individualized support models that give people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities greater control over their care and support services.

Successful state programs in New York and Virginia demonstrate the power of partnerships between government, developers, service providers, and foundations. New York's Integrated Supportive Housing Program encourages collaborations that create non-certified housing opportunities with rental subsidies and capital funding. Virginia's State Rental Assistance Program

provides rental assistance specifically for individuals with developmental disabilities, allowing them to choose their own housing in the private market while receiving separate support services.

Senate Bill 22's authorization for the Department of Disabilities to create affiliated foundations mirrors these successful models. The bill includes robust safeguards: foundations must operate under policies approved by the Attorney General and State Ethics Commission, undergo annual independent audits, and submit annual reports to the Governor and Legislature. Importantly, foundation contributions are supplemental and not intended to replace regular state appropriations, ensuring that the state maintains its core funding responsibilities.

Positive Outcomes Expected from Senate Bill 22

If enacted, Senate Bill 22 will have profound and far-reaching positive impacts for people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities in Maryland:

- Creation of a statutory mandate for housing programs, ensuring that housing is a core priority of the Department of Disabilities, not an optional service.
- Expansion of affordable, accessible, and integrated housing options, allowing more Marylanders with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities to live in communities of their choice.
- Reduction in unnecessary institutionalization and homelessness by providing viable community-based alternatives.
- Enhanced compliance with the Olmstead integration mandate and protection of the civil rights of people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.
- Establishment of sustainable funding mechanisms through affiliated foundations, enabling innovation and reducing sole reliance on state appropriations.
- Improved health outcomes, as stable housing serves as a critical foundation for physical and mental well-being.
- Greater independence, autonomy, and self-determination for individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, fostering dignity and empowerment.
- Relief for aging family supporters by providing secure housing options for their adult family members with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.

This legislation represents a significant policy advancement that acknowledges housing as a fundamental human right and creates the infrastructure necessary to make that right a reality for thousands of Marylanders.

People with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities deserve the same opportunities as all Marylanders to live independently, participate fully in their communities, and pursue their dreams. Housing is the foundation upon which all other aspects of community life are built. Senate Bill 22 provides the legislative framework and sustainable funding mechanisms necessary to address the severe housing crisis facing this population. It upholds the integration mandate of the Olmstead decision, recognizes housing as a critical social determinant of health, and creates pathways for innovation through public-private partnerships.

The evidence is clear and compelling: community-based housing leads to better outcomes, greater independence, and improved quality of life for people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. By mandating the establishment of housing programs and authorizing affiliated foundations, this legislation represents a crucial investment in human dignity, civil rights, and the social fabric of Maryland.

For these reasons, People On the Go Maryland respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 22.

Contact Information:

Mat Rice, Executive Director
People On the Go Maryland
Email: mat@pogmd.org
Phone: 410-925-5706

SB22.DDCouncil. Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Rachel London

Position: FAV



Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

CREATING CHANGE • IMPROVING LIVES

Senate Finance Committee

SB 22: Department of Disabilities – Housing Programs and Affiliated Foundations - Establishment

January 28, 2026

Position: Support

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council (Council) creates change to make it possible for people with developmental disabilities to live the lives they want with the support they need. As such, we support efforts to increase opportunities for Marylanders with and without disabilities to live, learn, work, and play together. SB 22 does just that.

WHAT does this legislation do?

- SB 22 lets the Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD) create one or more independent, non-government foundations to support its programs. There is no cost. MDOD will do this with existing resources, and the resulting foundation will support itself.
- These foundations could raise funds, apply for grants, and enter into partnerships to benefit MDOD programs that support assistive technology, employment, and affordable housing for people with disabilities.

WHY is this legislation important?

- **This bill increases access to funding and partnership opportunities for MDOD's critical programs.** Two programs that provide assistive technology for people with disabilities; the Office of Disability Employment Advancement and Policy to improve policies to help people with disabilities get and keep jobs in State government; and the Affordable Apartments Program that provides affordable, accessible housing units to people with disabilities.
- **More funding and partnerships increase access to the critical support people with disabilities need to live, learn, work, and play in the community.** 24% of Marylanders have a disability.

MDOD's work to increase access and opportunity for Marylanders with disabilities is done with limited State and federal funding. The programs provide critical support to people with disabilities, and the ability to expand them would greatly benefit Marylanders. Given the importance of these programs, and the need of Marylanders with disabilities, this no cost bill makes sense.

Contact: Rachel London, Executive Director, RLondon@md-council.org

2026 TCC SB 22 Senate Side.pdf

Uploaded by: Robyn Elliott

Position: FAV



Committee: Finance

Bill Numbers: Senate Bill 22 Department of Disabilities – Housing Programs and Affiliated Foundations – Establishment

Hearing Date: January 28, 2026

Position: Support

The Coordinating Center supports Senate Bill 22, which establishes affordable and accessible housing as a core responsibility of the Department of Disabilities and authorizes the creation of affiliated foundations to support this work. This legislation reflects a critical understanding that housing stability is foundational to health, independence, and community integration for individuals with disabilities.

Our organization provides care coordination to nearly 10,000 Marylanders annually through Maryland Medicaid programs, including the Community First Choice Program, and other home and community-based service waivers. Many of the individuals we serve experience significant barriers related to social determinants of health, particularly access to affordable and accessible housing. Our coordinators (i.e., Case Managers, Supports Planners, Services Coordinators, Coordinators of Community Service) work daily with individuals transitioning from institutional settings to the community, as well as individuals experiencing homelessness or housing instability who require coordinated, long-term supports.

From a case management perspective, this legislation is especially important because it strengthens the State’s ability to expand housing options that are integrated, accessible, and responsive to individual needs. Stable housing is often the linchpin that allows individuals with disabilities to access health care, maintain employment, and remain safely in their communities. Without appropriate housing, individuals with complex medical or behavioral health needs face increased risk of institutionalization, emergency service utilization, and poor health outcomes.

As The Department implements the housing programs and partnerships authorized under this bill, it will be essential to incorporate the practical expertise of case managers and care coordinators. Case managers bring direct, frontline insight into



the barriers individuals face in securing and maintaining housing, as well as the supports necessary for long-term stability. Meaningful input from case management professionals can help ensure that housing initiatives are person-centered, equitable, and effective for individuals with the highest levels of need.

Senate Bill 22 represents an important step forward in aligning housing policy with the lived realities of Marylanders with disabilities. We respectfully urge a favorable report and encourage continued engagement with case management professionals as these programs are developed and implemented.

If any additional information would be helpful, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net or (443) 926-3443.

SB22_NFB_FAV

Uploaded by: Ronza Othman

Position: FAV



Live the life you want.

From: Ronza Othman, President
National Federation of the Blind of Maryland
15 Charles Plaza, #3002
Baltimore, MD 21201 president@nfbmd.org

To: Senate Finance Committee

The members of the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland urge the Senate Finance Committee to give a favorable report to SB0022 -

Department of Disabilities - Housing Programs and Affiliated Foundations - Establishment.

Accessible and affordable housing is the greatest challenge that people with disabilities have to face. There is a shortage and the waiting list is extremely long. This bill goes beyond lip service by offering a good solution. It establishes housing programs and it gives the department the authority to develop relationships with foundations that can support these programs with the necessary funding. This bill develops private-public partnerships and allows the department to get some funding from foundations rather than the State, so there should not be a high fiscal note.

The goal of this bill is to offer integrated housing of their choice to persons with disabilities. Please vote "Yes" on this important bill.

For those reasons, we ask for a favorable report on SB0022. For questions, please contact me at President@nfbmd.org or at 443-426-4110.

MDOD_SB0022_FWA_Att_Amendments.pdf

Uploaded by: Anne Blackfield

Position: FWA



SB0022/903420/1

AMENDMENTS
PREPARED
BY THE
DEPT. OF LEGISLATIVE
SERVICES

21 JAN 26
11:58:53

BY: Chair, Finance Committee
(To be offered in the Finance Committee)

AMENDMENT TO SENATE BILL 22
(First Reading File Bill)

On page 3, in line 14, after “**THE**” insert “**OFFICE OF THE**”; and in line 18, after “**THE**” insert “**OFFICE OF THE**”.

SENATE BILL 22

O3

(PRE-FILED)

6lr0053
CF HB 226

By: **Chair, Finance Committee (By Request – Departmental – Disabilities)**

Requested: September 25, 2025

Introduced and read first time: January 14, 2026

Assigned to: Finance

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Department of Disabilities – Housing Programs and Affiliated Foundations –**
3 **Establishment**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring the Department of Disabilities to establish affordable and
5 accessible housing programs; authorizing the Department to establish affiliated
6 foundations to work with certain programs and units of the Department to solicit
7 and accept funds, partner with individuals and entities, and promote certain
8 activities that support certain projects; and generally relating to the establishment
9 of housing programs and affiliated foundations by the Department of Disabilities.

10 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
11 Article – Human Services
12 Section 7–114(b)
13 Annotated Code of Maryland
14 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

15 BY adding to
16 Article – Human Services
17 Section 7–117
18 Annotated Code of Maryland
19 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

20 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
21 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

22 **Article – Human Services**

23 7–114.

2 REPRINT OF SENATE BILL 22 as amended by SB0022/903420/1 01/21/26 at 11:58 AM

1 (b) The Department shall oversee and administer the following programs and
2 units:

3 (1) constituent services and ombudsmen programs;

4 (2) the Assistive Technology Guaranteed Loan Program under Subtitle 6
5 of this title;

6 (3) the Office of Personal Assistance Services, including the Attendant
7 Care Program under Subtitle 4 of this title;

8 (4) Telecommunications Access of Maryland under Subtitle 8 of this title;

9 (5) Telecommunications Devices and Distribution of Accessible
10 Information for Disabled Individuals under Subtitle 9 of this title;

11 (6) the Office of Disability Employment Advancement and Policy; [and]

12 (7) the Maryland Assistive Technology Program under Subtitle 14 of this
13 title; AND

14 (8) AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE HOUSING PROGRAMS.

15 7-117.

16 (A) IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 7-114 OF THIS SUBTITLE, THE DEPARTMENT
17 MAY ESTABLISH ONE OR MORE AFFILIATED FOUNDATIONS TO WORK WITH THE
18 MARYLAND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM, THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY
19 GUARANTEED LOAN PROGRAM, THE OFFICE OF DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT
20 ADVANCEMENT AND POLICY, AND THE DEPARTMENT'S AFFORDABLE AND
21 ACCESSIBLE HOUSING PROGRAMS.

22 (B) THE PURPOSE OF AN AFFILIATED FOUNDATION IS TO:

23 (1) SOLICIT AND ACCEPT FUNDS AND PARTNER WITH INDIVIDUALS,
24 CORPORATIONS, AND OTHER ENTITIES TO SUPPORT INNOVATIVE PROJECTS
25 DESIGNED TO MAINTAIN, EXPAND, AND ENHANCE THE PROGRAMS AND UNITS
26 SPECIFIED IN SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION; AND

27 (2) PROMOTE ACTIVITIES THAT:

28 (I) ENHANCE AWARENESS OF, ACCESS TO, AND EFFECTIVE USE
29 OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY, ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, AND
30 ENVIRONMENTAL ADAPTATIONS THAT ALLOW INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES TO

3 REPRINT OF SENATE BILL 22 as amended by SB0022/903420/1 01/21/26 at 11:58 AM

1 PARTICIPATE IN EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION, HOUSING, TRANSPORTATION, PUBLIC
2 SAFETY, RECREATION, HEALTH CARE, AND OTHER ASPECTS OF DAILY LIFE;

3 (II) SUPPORT TRAINING, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, AND
4 REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS THAT PROMOTE THE HIRING AND RETENTION OF
5 INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYMENT;
6 AND

7 (III) CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTEGRATED, AFFORDABLE,
8 AND ACCESSIBLE HOUSING FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES TO LIVE IN THE
9 COMMUNITIES OF THEIR CHOICE.

10 (C) (1) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL:

11 (I) DEVELOP POLICIES FOR OPERATING EACH AFFILIATED
12 FOUNDATION THAT THE DEPARTMENT ESTABLISHES, INCLUDING THE AFFILIATED
13 FOUNDATION NAME; AND

14 (II) SUBMIT EACH POLICY DEVELOPED TO THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY
15 GENERAL AND THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION FOR REVIEW AND, IF
16 APPROPRIATE, APPROVAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPHS (2) AND (3) OF THIS
17 SUBSECTION.

18 (2) THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL SHALL:

19 (I) REVIEW THE POLICIES THE DEPARTMENT DEVELOPS
20 UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION FOR FORM AND LEGAL SUFFICIENCY;
21 AND

22 (II) IF APPROPRIATE, APPROVE THE POLICIES FOR USE IN
23 GOVERNING THE DEPARTMENT'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE AFFILIATED
24 FOUNDATION.

25 (3) THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION SHALL:

26 (I) REVIEW THE POLICIES THE DEPARTMENT DEVELOPS
27 UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION THAT PERTAIN TO CONFLICTS OF
28 INTEREST; AND

29 (II) IF APPROPRIATE, APPROVE THE POLICIES FOR USE IN
30 GOVERNING AN OFFICIAL OR EMPLOYEE OF THE DEPARTMENT WHO ALSO SERVES
31 AS A DIRECTOR OR AN OFFICIAL OF THE AFFILIATED FOUNDATION.

4 REPRINT OF SENATE BILL 22 as amended by SB0022/903420/1 01/21/26 at 11:58 AM

1 (D) (1) AN AFFILIATED FOUNDATION MAY SOLICIT AND RECEIVE
2 CONTRIBUTIONS FROM BUSINESSES, GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES, NONPROFIT
3 ORGANIZATIONS, AND INDIVIDUALS INTERESTED IN THE PROMOTION OF PROGRAMS
4 AND UNITS ADMINISTERED OR SUPPORTED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

5 (2) IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 7-113 OF THIS SUBTITLE AUTHORIZING
6 THE SECRETARY TO RECEIVE FUNDS FROM ANY PUBLIC OR PRIVATE SOURCE TO
7 CARRY OUT THE POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE DEPARTMENT, THE SECRETARY
8 SHALL RECEIVE AND DEPOSIT FUNDS FROM AN AFFILIATED FOUNDATION INTO A
9 SEPARATE SPECIAL FUND.

10 (E) (1) AN AFFILIATED FOUNDATION ESTABLISHED UNDER THIS
11 SECTION MAY NOT BE CONSIDERED AN AGENCY OR INSTRUMENTALITY OF THE
12 STATE OR A UNIT OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH FOR ANY PURPOSE.

13 (2) A FINANCIAL OBLIGATION OR LIABILITY OF AN AFFILIATED
14 FOUNDATION ESTABLISHED UNDER THIS SECTION MAY NOT BE CONSIDERED A DEBT
15 OR AN OBLIGATION OF THE STATE OR THE DEPARTMENT.

16 (F) (1) NOTWITHSTANDING §§ 5-501 THROUGH 5-504 OF THE GENERAL
17 PROVISIONS ARTICLE, AN OFFICIAL OR EMPLOYEE OF THE DEPARTMENT MAY
18 BECOME A DIRECTOR OR AN OFFICIAL OF AN AFFILIATED FOUNDATION
19 ESTABLISHED UNDER THIS SECTION.

20 (2) AN OFFICIAL OR EMPLOYEE OF THE DEPARTMENT WHO SERVES
21 AS A DIRECTOR OR AN OFFICIAL OF AN AFFILIATED FOUNDATION ESTABLISHED
22 UNDER THIS SECTION:

23 (i) MAY NOT BE COMPENSATED, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, BY
24 THE AFFILIATED FOUNDATION; AND

25 (ii) MAY BE REIMBURSED FOR BONA FIDE EXPENSES INCURRED
26 IN THE PERFORMANCE OF ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN ON BEHALF OF THE
27 AFFILIATED FOUNDATION AS AUTHORIZED BY THE DEPARTMENT AND THE BOARD
28 OF DIRECTORS OF THE AFFILIATED FOUNDATION.

29 (3) (i) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL NOTIFY THE STATE ETHICS
30 COMMISSION IN WRITING WHENEVER THE DEPARTMENT ALLOWS AN OFFICIAL OR
31 EMPLOYEE OF THE DEPARTMENT TO SERVE AS A DIRECTOR OR AN OFFICIAL OF AN
32 AFFILIATED FOUNDATION.

33 (ii) WITHIN 30 DAYS AFTER RECEIPT OF THE NOTICE UNDER
34 SUBPARAGRAPH (i) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION SHALL

5 REPRINT OF SENATE BILL 22 as amended by SB0022/903420/1 01/21/26 at 11:58 AM

1 NOTIFY THE DEPARTMENT OF ANY OBJECTIONS OR CONCERNS PERTAINING TO THE
2 JOINT SERVICE IDENTIFIED IN THE NOTICE.

3 (III) ON RECEIPT OF A NOTICE FROM THE STATE ETHICS
4 COMMISSION UNDER SUBPARAGRAPH (II) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, THE DEPARTMENT
5 SHALL REEXAMINE THE JOINT SERVICE IDENTIFIED IN THE NOTICE.

6 (4) ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1 EACH YEAR, THE DEPARTMENT
7 SHALL REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR, THE LEGISLATIVE POLICY COMMITTEE OF THE
8 GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT
9 ARTICLE, AND THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION ON:

10 (I) THE NAMES OF THE OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES SERVING
11 AS A DIRECTOR OR AN OFFICIAL OF AN AFFILIATED FOUNDATION; AND

12 (II) HOW THE POLICIES ADOPTED UNDER SUBSECTION (C) OF
13 THIS SECTION HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED IN THE PRECEDING CALENDAR YEAR.

14 (G) (1) EACH YEAR, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL HIRE AN INDEPENDENT
15 CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT TO:

16 (I) AUDIT AN AFFILIATED FOUNDATION ESTABLISHED UNDER
17 THIS SECTION; AND

18 (II) SUBMIT TO THE DEPARTMENT A REPORT ON THE AUDIT OF
19 THE AFFILIATED FOUNDATION.

20 (2) NOTWITHSTANDING SUBSECTION (D) OF THIS SECTION, IF AN
21 AFFILIATED FOUNDATION HAS NOT BEEN AUDITED WITHIN THE PAST YEAR:

22 (I) THE AFFILIATED FOUNDATION MAY NOT SOLICIT AND
23 RECEIVE CONTRIBUTIONS; AND

24 (II) THE DEPARTMENT MAY NOT ACCEPT CONTRIBUTIONS
25 FROM THE AFFILIATED FOUNDATION.

26 (H) CONTRIBUTIONS ACCEPTED BY THE DEPARTMENT FROM AN
27 AFFILIATED FOUNDATION ESTABLISHED UNDER THIS SECTION ARE SUPPLEMENTAL
28 TO AND ARE NOT INTENDED TO TAKE THE PLACE OF FUNDING THAT OTHERWISE
29 WOULD BE APPROPRIATED IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET BILL OR CAPITAL BUDGET BILL
30 FOR THE DEPARTMENT.

31 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
32 October 1, 2026.

MDOD_SB0022_FWA_FIN_2026.01.26.pdf

Uploaded by: Anne Blackfield

Position: FWA



BILL: SB 22

POSITION: FWA – Favorable with Amendments

COMMITTEE: FINANCE

DATE: January 26, 2026

Dear Chair Beidle,

The Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD) offers this letter of support for **SB 22, Department of Disabilities - Housing Program and Affiliated Foundations – Established**, including amendments that make technical changes to the proposed language at § 7-117(c), as recommended by the Office of the Attorney General (see attached).

This legislation is critical to the long-term sustainability and growth of essential programs for people with disabilities. SB 22 would authorize MDOD to establish an independent, non-governmental affiliated foundation. This foundation would be empowered to raise funds, apply for grants, and form private partnerships for the benefit of MDOD’s assistive technology, employment, and affordable housing programs. The legislation also codifies our existing housing program.

The affiliated foundation will support four vital units within MDOD that face funding limitations:

- **Maryland Assistive Technology Program (MDTAP):** Expansion is limited due to rising costs and uncertain future federal funding for this program, which provides a number of assistive technology services to Marylanders with disabilities.
- **Assistive Technology Guaranteed Loan Program (ATLP):** Growth is restricted by its low-interest model, and future federal grants are not guaranteed.
- **Office of Disability Employment Advancement and Policy (ODEAP):** Created last year by the Model Employer Act (HB 502/SB 233), the office’s State as a Model Employer (SAME) initiative would benefit from increased private funding.
- **Affordable Apartments Program:** Expansion for this program has been stalled since its prior private partnership and federal grants concluded.

SB 22 is modeled on the Department of Natural Resources’ HB 717, which the General Assembly passed in 2025. There is no cost to the State, as MDOD will use existing resources to create the foundation, which will then be self-supporting.

Passing SB 22 will provide MDOD with the necessary flexibility to access private funding and partnerships, which is essential for sustaining and expanding programs and services that help Marylanders with disabilities work, learn, and live in their communities. We respectfully request a **favorable report on SB 22 (with the sponsor amendments)** from the Committee.

Sincerely,

Carol A. Beatty
Carol A. Beatty, Secretary

MDOA - Written FWA SB22 - MDOD Affiliated Foundati

Uploaded by: Carmel Roques

Position: FWA



Wes Moore | Governor

Aruna Miller | Lt. Governor

Carmel Roques | Secretary

Date: January 26, 2026

Bill Number: **SB 22**

Bill Title: Department of Disabilities - Housing Programs and Affiliated Foundations - Establishment

Committee: Finance

MDOA Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

The Department of Aging (MDOA) thanks the Chair and Committee members for the opportunity to submit this favorable with amendments testimony for Senate Bill (SB) 22 - Department of Disabilities - Housing Programs and Affiliated Foundations - Establishment.

The Maryland Department of Aging (MDOA) serves as Maryland's State Unit of Aging, administering federal and state funding for core services for older adults, overseeing the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) network at the local level that provides these services, and planning for Maryland's older adult population. MDOA strongly supports the Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD) in bringing forward SB 22. This bill would authorize MDOD to establish one or more independent, non-government foundations that could raise outside funds, apply for grants, and form private partnerships to benefit sorely needed initiatives for people with disabilities. These new foundations will allow Marylanders with disabilities to benefit from more funding outside of government. It will fund more affordable accessible housing and assistive technology for people with disabilities as well as the state's Office of Disability Employment Advancement and Policy. In times of limited government funding and growing populations, needs, and reductions in federal support, MDOA commends MDOD for adopting this type of expansive approach to its work. MDOA supports the adoption of MDOD's technical amendments.



Wes Moore | Governor

Aruna Miller | Lt. Governor

Carmel Roques | Secretary

Deepening philanthropic partnerships and leveraging varied funding sources to deliver more useful services to more people with disabilities directly aligns with MDOA's Longevity-Ready Maryland Plan¹, which will work to make Maryland more prepared for our increasingly longer lives over the next 10 years.

For these reasons, the Department of Aging respectfully urges a **favorable with amendments** report for SB 22. If you have any questions, please contact Andrea Nunez, Legislative Director, at andrea.nunez@maryland.gov or (443) 414-8183.

Sincerely,

Carmel Roques
Secretary
Maryland Department of Aging

¹ MD Department of Aging website, "Longevity Ready Maryland," *available at*: <https://lrm.maryland.gov/>

(SB 22) Finance Informational Testimony - State Et

Uploaded by: Kate Thompson

Position: INFO



COMMISSION MEMBERS:
CRAIG D. ROSWELL, *Chair*
KAREN D. MORGAN
MARIELA OLIVARES
JAMES N. ROBEY, JR.
GENEAU M. THAMES

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

45 CALVERT STREET, 3rd FLOOR
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401
410-260-7770 / 1-877-669-6085
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JENNIFER K. ALLGAIR
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General Counsel
KATHERINE P. THOMPSON
Staff Counsel
ANA L. HENRY
Assistant General Counsel
PANSY S. WATSON
Assistant Counsel

January 28, 2026

Senate Bill 22 – Department of Disabilities – Housing Programs and Affiliated Foundations

Testimony Before the Finance Committee

The State Ethics Commission provides this informational written testimony to explain the impact of this proposed legislation on the agency. This legislation provides for exemptions from certain conflict of interest provisions of the Public Ethics Law for agency employees serving in specific roles with the agency-affiliated foundation. The legislation is consistent with prior legislation allowing similar exemptions for the employees of other State agencies who serve in various capacities with other agency-affiliated foundations with other State agencies such as the Maryland Stadium Authority, the Historic St. Mary's City Commission, and the Department of Natural Resources. In those instances, the exemption provisions for affiliated foundation activities are contained in the agency's specific enabling statute for the affiliated foundation rather than in the provisions of the Public Ethics Law.

Senate Bill 22 will not have a fiscal impact on the State Ethics Commission. The legislation would have a small operational impact on the agency. The State Ethics Commission will be required to work with the Department of Disabilities (DoD) to provide guidance and receive reports related to DoD officials or employees serving as an official or director of an agency affiliated foundation.