



Governor Wes Moore

Lt. Governor Aruna Miller

Secretary Walter L. Simmons

Bill Number: House Bill 1462
Title: Department of Social and Economic Mobility – Individuals With Disabilities
Committee: Government, Labor, and Elections
Hearing Date: March 3, 2026
Position: Letter of Concern

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Department of Social and Economic Mobility (DoSEM) respectfully submits this Letter of Concern for House Bill 1462. While DoSEM appreciates the bill’s intent to elevate the needs and interests of Marylanders with disabilities, DoSEM has significant operational concerns with the bill as drafted. Specifically, this bill assigns substantial new responsibilities to DoSEM without any accompanying funding or resources, and DoSEM is not able to implement the bill using existing resources.

HB 1462 expands the responsibilities of the Office of Small, Minority, and Women Business Affairs (OSBA) within DoSEM to broadly include matters affecting the rights and interests of individuals with disabilities and their communities. The bill also renames OSBA as the “Office of Small, Minority, Disability, and Women Business Affairs.”

Under § 14-301 of the State Finance and Procurement Article, individuals with physical or mental disabilities are considered “socially and economically disadvantaged” in Maryland’s Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) Program. OSBA’s current statutory duties are focused on promoting activities for the growth of MBEs, providing training and educational opportunities for nonminority prime contractors related to prime contractor responsibilities with respect to MBEs, and providing technical and managerial assistance to MBEs. DoSEM is concerned that HB 1462 would significantly broaden OSBA’s mission beyond its procurement- and business-growth centered functions—particularly by requiring OSBA to advise the Governor on matters affecting individuals with disabilities—without ensuring OSBA has the training, staffing, and subject-matter expertise needed to carry out this expanded mandate.

DoSEM is also concerned that the bill could create operational inefficiencies, impose an undue burden on the disability community through unclear points of accountability, and result in duplicative or overlapping work with the Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD) and other agencies that already possess core expertise in disability policy and services.

Most importantly, DoSEM is a newly established executive-level cabinet agency and does not possess the existing resources to carry out the expanded obligations contemplated by HB 1462. The bill’s broad scope could require DoSEM to address a wide range of issues affecting individuals with disabilities, necessitating new staffing capacity, program development, and outreach efforts. At this time, there are no comparable programs within DoSEM to absorb these responsibilities, and existing staff do not have the capacity or subject-matter expertise to take on the duties proposed in HB 1462.

For these reasons, DoSEM respectfully submits this Letter of Concern for HB 1462 and looks forward to continued discussion with the bill sponsor and the Committee to address the bill’s implementation needs. For additional information, please contact Ardy Kamali, Chief of External Affairs, Department of Social and Economic Mobility, at (410) 693-6642 or ardy.kamali@maryland.gov.