

Dear Committee Members,

We are writing in strong support of HB 105 – Ralph’s Act.

Over the past two years, we have witnessed the extraordinary effort of our close friend Stefanie Hennes has undertaken to secure appropriate services for her developmentally disabled brother, Ralph, during an already devastating period for their family. Following the unexpected loss of their mother and the serious health decline of their father, Stefanie stepped in to ensure Ralph’s safety and stability and move him from out of state to her Maryland home. What followed, however, was not a smooth transition, but a prolonged and deeply frustrating process marked by delays, shifting explanations, and procedural barriers.

Despite extensive documentation of Ralph’s eligibility and the clear medical evidence that his father could no longer safely care for him, Stefanie faced repeated obstacles in obtaining Crisis Resolution placement. At every stage, she acted responsibly and diligently gathering evaluations, submitting physician letters, coordinating with service providers, and seeking guidance from counsel and elected officials. She did everything the system asked of her, and more.

What has been most concerning to us is that the current framework appears to require a crisis to fully materialize before appropriate action is taken. Families should not have to wait for harm to occur or place a loved one in a dangerous situation—simply to access necessary services. Nor should a Maryland resident stepping up to care for a dependent family member be forced into instability to satisfy procedural technicalities.

HB 105 addresses these gaps thoughtfully and pragmatically. It ensures that when a long-term Maryland resident assumes responsibility for a loved one with developmental disabilities due to an out-of-state caregiver’s impaired health, that family can access priority consideration in a timely and humane way. This change would prevent avoidable disruption and better protect vulnerable individuals during moments of genuine caregiver crisis.

We respectfully urge the Committee to pass HB 105 – Ralph’s Act.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Josh and Jenilee Singer
Chevy Chase, MD