

I am Jimara Kocik, mom of three sons, and one of my sons, age 12, has profound autism.

I am asking the committee to vote yes and advance the Bill HB 1445, this important legislation.

Members of the committee, I respectfully request that you vote in favor and demand that the State of Maryland follow timelines and provide help to prevent Medicaid and waiver services from ending, and if Medicaid coverage has ended, help to get Medicaid back as soon as possible. Maryland can't end a person's Medicaid when it does not do its part to keep the person continuously enrolled; it is unfair.

Maryland must reinstate a person's eligibility if they were disenrolled for certain reasons.

Those families who are disenrolled are highly unlikely to be able to rejoin the program. I believe the process of appealing is unfair for the disabled and their families, and it is very costly in terms of time and money.

When we should be focused on caring for the disabled and offering them the best services instead, we are removing them from services and putting their lives in danger due to the interruption of their services.

I can't imagine families with no knowledge of disability policy and procedures, and who are non-English speaking, and what happens to them if they are disenrolled?

We already know there is a disparity in services for families of color, and it continues if we are not doing enough to improve services equally.

Please advance the Bill HB 1445.

Thank you for your time, services, and continued commitment to our community.

Jimara kocik

Autism Society of Maryland
Board of Director

Maryland Equity Coalition
Member