



**THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES**  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony:** HB1423 - Maryland Department of Health - Workgroup on Home- and Community-Based Services

**Committee:** Health

**Hearing Date:** March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026

**Position:** Favorable

Good afternoon, Chair Bagnall, Vice Chair Cullison, and members of the House Health Committee. For the record, I am Delegate Greg Wims, here to present House Bill 1423 - Maryland Department of Health - Workgroup on Home- and Community-Based Services

Marylanders deserve a care system that is clear, accessible, and reliable, especially when families are facing aging-related needs, disability support, or complex medical conditions. Home and community-based services are often the option that best preserves independence and quality of life, while also supporting family caregivers and easing pressure on institutional settings. But in too many cases, families encounter barriers such as confusing eligibility rules, inconsistent navigation across programs, long processing times, and limited provider availability.

HB 1423 is a practical, responsible step to identify what is working, what is not, and what improvements will help Marylanders access services more efficiently and equitably. The bill directs the Maryland Department of Health to establish a Workgroup on Home- and Community-Based Services (HCBS). The workgroup will be tasked to address core issues in the waiver system such as: eligibility requirements, the application and intake process, the average time from application to receiving of services, barriers to access, waitlist size, staff turnover among application-processing personnel, and the geographic distribution of both providers and recipients. The Workgroup is also directed to consider whether reimbursement rates are sufficient to sustain a stable, high-quality network of providers.

As written, the bill requires the Workgroup to review and evaluate following programs:

- Community First Choice Program
- Community Personal Assistance Services Program
- Home and Community-Based Options Waiver
- Increased Community Services Program
- Medical Day Care Services Waiver

HB1423 also ensures the Workgroup includes the right perspectives. State leadership and agencies are included as well as stakeholders with direct experience in the HCBS system. These include advocacy voices, providers, and individuals with expertise across the continuum of care services and supports.

Furthermore, I have submitted a sponsor amendment which would add three more members to the workgroup. The amendment adds the Secretary of Disabilities or their designee, one representative of a cross-disability advocacy organization, and one individual or family member of an individual who has received services from one of the programs listed in the bill. I would like to thank the Department of Disabilities for bringing those amendments to me and working with my office to ensure better representation of the Workgroup's members.

HB 1423 is also time-limited and outcome-focused. It establishes a clear reporting timeline and includes a sunset provision, so the Workgroup remains targeted, delivers concrete recommendations, and does not become permanent bureaucratic clutter.

**For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on House Bill 1423.**