



House Health Committee

Maryland Protecting People With Disabilities Act (HB1445)

February 26, 2026

Position: Favorable

The Maryland Down Syndrome Advocacy Coalition (MDAC) is a coalition of the five Down syndrome organizations in Maryland, as well as individuals with Down syndrome and their family members. We have come together to advocate for improved quality of life for all individuals with Down syndrome throughout Maryland.

The **Maryland Protecting People With Disabilities Act (SB 742 / HB 119)** is designed to reform the Medicaid eligibility process to prevent vulnerable individuals from losing access to critical services due to administrative errors. Many individuals with disabilities are losing coverage due to technicalities, missing paperwork, or mailing errors during the redetermination process, not because they are ineligible. The current eligibility redetermination process has been labeled broken and life-altering, with reports of individuals receiving termination letters citing non-existent regulations.

MDAC supports eliminating the 90-day appeal limit, requiring continuous coverage during appeals, prohibiting procedural terminations due to paperwork errors, and strengthening communication with providers to prevent unnecessary institutionalization or the threat of institutionalization. The Act requires the state to exhaust all available verification methods before cutting services and ensures that no services are terminated while an appeal is pending. By mandating uninterrupted coverage throughout the appeals process, the bill protects individuals from losing critical supports and prevents the disastrous consequences that service gaps can have on people who rely on daily assistance to live safe and engaged lives in the community.

By repealing the 90-day time limit for appealing a loss of Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) eligibility, the bill also provides families more flexibility to navigate complex legal and administrative hurdles and prevents individuals with disabilities from the threat of being forced into institutions simply because of bureaucratic delays in Medicaid eligibility.

Finally, the bill requires the State to improve electronic data exchange and notify service providers immediately when an individual loses eligibility, allowing for faster intervention before services are cut off. By improving electronic data exchange and requiring immediate notification to providers when someone loses eligibility, the bill allows providers to act quickly—clarifying documentation, correcting errors, or supporting an appeal—*before* services are cut off, promoting greater stability for people who rely on daily supports to thrive in the community.

We urge a favorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

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