

**Supplemental Written Testimony Regarding Fiscal Impact
HB 1368 – Shifra’s Act
Cheri Dowling
Parent of a Deaf Child**

I would also like to briefly address the fiscal impact estimates recently referenced by local school systems. The intent of this legislation is not to create new services or additional mandates beyond what is already required in a student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP). Rather, the bill focuses on transparency and communication when services that are already legally required under federal special education law are missed, interrupted, incomplete, or not initiated. Families often learn months later that services were not consistently delivered, making it difficult to address gaps in a timely manner. Earlier notification simply allows IEP teams to respond sooner, collaborate on solutions, and minimize the need for larger corrective actions later.

Providing timely notice when services are missed allows IEP teams to address concerns early and collaboratively. When gaps in services are identified and resolved quickly, it can help prevent situations from escalating into larger disputes or requiring significant compensatory services later, which can be far more costly for school systems and disruptive for students.

As both a parent of a Deaf child and someone who works closely with families across Maryland navigating special education systems in public and private schools, I consistently see how timely communication strengthens collaboration between families and school teams and helps ensure students receive the services already outlined in their IEPs.