



Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

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Senate Finance Committee

February 10, 2016

SB 413: Developmental Disabilities Administration - Crisis Resolution Funding

Position: SUPPORT

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council strongly supports SB413 because it will ensure that there is crucial funding in the state budget every year to address the ongoing support needs of people in the highest priority category on the Developmental Disabilities Administration's waiting list – Crisis Resolution. Without a mandated appropriation targeted to this group, people will continue to languish without essential services and support.

SB413 would require an annual \$3.5m general fund appropriation for people in Crisis Resolution, and ensures funding is annualized to meet ongoing needs. *This will be matched with federal funds to likely yield close to \$6m in total funds.*

Children and adults on the waiting list and their families need services and supports to help keep their families intact and assist with basic personal care and activities of daily living that most of us take for granted. Examples of real people who have languished on the DDA Waiting Listⁱ:

- **Joyce, who has cerebral palsy, uses a wheelchair and requires assistance with all activities of daily living, receives her care from her elderly grandmother who just recovered from a stroke.**
- **Stuart has a head injury and significant medical issues. His mom quit her job to care for him at home, but needs the income.**
- **Carla lives in a home that is not accessible. Her dad carries her up and down the stairs, but he has developed back problems.**

Even these very difficult – and at times extreme - circumstances don't necessarily mean these individuals meet the Crisis Resolution criteria.

As the name of the priority category suggests, individuals placed in Crisis Resolution have been deemed by the Administration to meet strict criteria identifying them as having circumstances that must be resolved to ensure health, safety and well-being. Crisis Resolution means the individual isⁱⁱ:

- Homeless, or at risk of losing their home;
- At risk of harming themselves or others; or
- Have caregivers who are elderly or cannot care for them because of illness

With the bar set so high to be placed in the Crisis Resolution priority category, people in this category must not wait – their crises must be resolved. For too many years this has not been the case. SB413 will change that and have a significant impact on many individuals and families for years to come by ensuring essential support is available.

There are nearly 8000 Marylanders with developmental disabilities on the DDA waiting list for community services. Typically, there are between 100-125 people in the Crisis Resolution category at the beginning of each fiscal year and others enter this category when their circumstances change or due to a lack of support.

~over~

In addition, there are over 1200 people in the next priority category—Crisis Prevention,ⁱⁱⁱ which is defined as^{iv}:

- In urgent need for services, as determined by DDA;
- Will be at substantial risk for meeting one or more of the criteria for Crisis Resolution within one year; or
- Have a caregiver who is 65 years old or older

One can see from the Crisis Prevention criteria that even these individuals and families are in situations that require attention: “urgent” need – “substantial risk” – “65 or older caregiver.”

SB413 could benefit individuals in Crisis Prevention, as well as those in Crisis Resolution. The bill allows any funds that may remain after everyone in Crisis Resolution is served to be used to support people in Crisis Prevention.

The remaining 6500 people on the waiting list are in a category called Current Request, which means^v they have a current need for services but are not in an urgent need.

The DDA waiting list has been a top priority for the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council for many years and we welcome and support SB413 as a long-awaited, significant response to those in the greatest need.

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ⁱ Real people with names changed. Information provided by resource coordinators.

ⁱⁱCode of Maryland Regulations: 10.22.12.07B (1)-(3)

ⁱⁱⁱ Developmental Disabilities Administration data; November 2015

^{iv}Code of Maryland Regulations: 10.22.12.07B (1)-(3)

^v Ibid.