



## MARYLAND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COALITION

Dedicated to the rights and quality of life for people with developmental disabilities in Maryland

### **SB 327: Civil Actions—Financial Exploitation of Vulnerable Adults (Maryland SAFE Act) & HB 347: Criminal Law—Exploitation of Vulnerable Adults or Elderly Individuals—Undue Influence**

#### **WHAT do these bills do?**

- SB 327 creates an additional legal remedy when someone financially exploits certain vulnerable adults, including people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD).
- HB 347 changes the definition of undue influence in criminal law to specifically address situations when people with disabilities may be at risk of being exploited or taken advantage of.

#### **WHY are these bills important?**

- Some adults with disabilities are vulnerable and at risk of a range of unfair or coercive behaviors including financial abuse.
- We know from the Attorney General's office that more reports of abuse against vulnerable adults are being reported. For every case of abuse that is reported, experts estimate that as many as five cases go unreported.
- Current laws and regulations only protect people receiving services from DDA licensed providers. Greater protections are needed for people with disabilities who do not receive DDA services.
- Too often, the response when a person with I/DD is financially exploited is to restrict their civil rights through guardianship. We support tools that can hold those responsible for exploitation accountable instead.

*For additional information about the bill highlighted here, please contact:*

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