



## MARYLAND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COALITION

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

### Issues Affecting Adults with Disabilities

People with developmental disabilities need and want to work, earn real wages, and thrive in Maryland's economy.

#### **HB 502/SB 433: Office of Disability Employment Advancement and Policy and Maryland as a Model Employer Initiative - Established**

Establishes the Office of Disability Employment Advancement and Policy within the Department of Disabilities. It also creates the Maryland as a Model Employer Initiative to promote the recruitment, hiring, retention, and career advancement of people with disabilities across State government.

- More needs to be done to address employment gaps. Only 45% of Marylanders with disabilities (ages 18-64) are employed, compared to 79% of their peers without disabilities.
- More needs to be done to improve economic outcomes. 27.6% of people supported by DDA providers worked in individual competitive jobs, and only 35% of those people worked more than 20 hours per week.

#### **HB 430: Employed Individuals with Disabilities Program (EID) - Upper Age Limit - Prohibition**

Removes the current age cap of 65 years old and prohibits the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) from establishing an upper age limit for eligibility to receive EID services.

- The removal of the EID upper age limit will allow working people with disabilities to continue to work without fear of losing their Medicaid coverage.
- Working people with developmental disabilities 65 years and older will be able to maintain their community services, such as Job Development, Co-Worker Employment Supports, and Follow Along Supports.

Access to assistive technology and the ability to repair powered wheelchairs increase independence.

#### **HB 214/SB 208: Human Services - Maryland Assistive Technology Program - Establishment**

Formally recognizes the Maryland Assistive Technology Program (MDTAP) as a program of the Maryland Department of Disabilities in State law. Allows MDTAP to generate revenue to be placed in a special fund so more people get assistive technology (AT) at no cost to the state.

- MDTAP helps connect people with disabilities to AT devices that help them live, learn, work, and play in their homes and communities. This bill will help more Marylanders with disabilities benefit from MDTAP services.

**HB 31/SB 382: Consumer Protection – Right to Repair – Powered Wheelchairs**

Requires power wheelchair manufacturers to provide the things needed – from documentation to software and tools - to repair a powered wheelchair to the owner or an independent repair provider. Also adds a provision for powered wheelchair repairs to Maryland’s Commercial Law on unfair trade practices.

- Removes barriers to repair powered wheelchairs. Powered wheelchair users often face long waits when something goes wrong with their wheelchair. That can be harmful to people who rely on powered wheelchairs for mobility and independence.

People with disabilities face barriers to justice when interacting with law enforcement, emergency services, and the court system. These bills increase access to justice.

**HB 249/SB 125: Residential Real Property – Local Limits on Summoning Law Enforcement of Emergency Services**

Prohibits a local jurisdiction from enforcing a law or ordinance that limits a person’s ability to call law enforcement or emergency services. This bill builds and expands on 2023 legislation that prohibited landlords from using a lease with provisions limiting a tenant’s ability to call law enforcement or emergency services. It also prohibited local jurisdictions from passing local laws and ordinances, known as nuisance laws, that impose a penalty or limit the number of calls.

- People with disabilities are disproportionately impacted under nuisance laws.
- It is critical that people with disabilities have full access to police and emergency services where they live.

**HB 703/SB 507: Criminal Procedure - Diagnosis of Developmental Disability or Intellectual Disability – Evidence**

Requires a judge or court commissioner to consider evidence of a defendant’s Intellectual and/or Developmental Disability (IDD) when making a decision about releasing someone before trial.

- Recognizes that people with IDD face unique challenges and, without proper consideration, may not receive a fair and just legal process.
- Provides an opportunity to divert people with IDD from going to jail or prison.

**HB 940: Criminal Procedure - Probation Before Judgment - Defendants Diagnosed with Autism or Intellectual Disabilities**

Requires a court to place a defendant diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder or an intellectual disability on probation before judgment under certain circumstances. That means the person is put on probation before a judge finds them guilty of a crime. While a person is on probation they have to follow certain rules set by the Court.

- Amendment needed: People with Developmental Disabilities must be added to this bill.
- Recognizes that not all people with IDD are incompetent to stand trial, but that their disability should still be considered before sentencing.
- People with IDD are overrepresented in the criminal justice system.

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