



Montgomery County

Office of Intergovernmental Relations

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SB 28

DATE: January 25, 2022

SPONSOR: Senator Kelley, et al.

ASSIGNED TO: Finance

CONTACT PERSON: Leslie Frey (leslie.frey@montgomerycountymd.gov)

POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT- Department of Health and Human Services

Home- and Community-Based Services Waiver - Participation and Applications

This bill would require a minimum enrollment of 7500 individuals for the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Medicaid waiver, and require the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) to send at least 600 applications to individuals on a waiting list for HCBS each month.

Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (MCDHHS) supports increasing the number of individuals in the State served by HCBS. Maryland maintains one of the largest waiting lists for HBCS in the country¹, and MCDHHS wholeheartedly supports the intent of the bill to increase the number of Marylanders served by the program. However, the State struggles with staff shortages and backlogs relating to the current workload required to enable individuals to begin services let alone higher targets as would be required by Senate Bill 28. MCDHHS has observed delays in processing waiver applications, obtaining nurse assessments, assigning cases to a Supports Planning Agency, and reviewal and approval of Plans of Services- all critical elements of an individual entering HCBS.

MCDHHS would support an increase in waiver enrollment capacity if SB 28 is amended to also address existing barriers to service. We respectfully ask for an amendment to the bill to require an analysis of the backlogs and a report from MDH on a plan to implement the recommendations raised in the analysis.

Montgomery County respectfully urges the committee to adopt the above amendment and issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 28.

¹ <https://files.kff.org/attachment/Issue-Brief-Key-State-Policy-Choices-About-Medicaid-Home-and-Community-Based-Services>