

Dear Chairperson and Esteemed Committee Members,

2/26/24

RE: HB0352/SB0362

I am writing to request you remove from the BRFA (HB352/SB362) any reference to ARTICLE-HEALTH-GENERAL SECTION 7-101 & SECTION 7-409. Leave all the provisions of the Self Direction Act of 2022 (The Act) intact. Do not allow the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) to place an arbitrary limit on Individual- Directed and Family-Directed Goods and Services (IFDGS) for individuals in the self-directed service model.

My name is Patti Saylor, I am a nurse who has provided services to people self-directing their DDA waiver services for the last seventeen years. I have worked for over 250 individuals and their families. I am a member of the Self Direction Advocacy Board of Directors and a parent of a former self-directed waiver participant, now deceased.

The changes proposed in the above referenced bill will reverse a major provision of The Self Direction Act of 2022. Allowing the DDA to establish an arbitrary limit on Individual and Family Goods and Services (IFDGS).

I was a participating member of the Maryland Self Direction Program Workgroup convened by HGO Chairperson Delegate Shane Pendergrass and then Vice Chairperson, Josephine Pena Melnyk after the 2021 legislative session. Workgroup membership consisted of The Honorable Karen Lewis Young, The Honorable Susan Lee, The Honorable Nicholas Kipke, The Honorable Lisa Belcastro, The Honorable Harry Bhandari, The Honorable Kirill Reznik and The Honorable Geradine Valentino-Smith.

The remaining membership was comprised of people with lived experience of disability, family members, advocates and state agency representatives. The Workgroup was staffed by Kris Fair, Committee Secretary and Erin Hopwood, Committee Council

Additionally, the workgroup enlisted the input of nationally recognized subject matter experts and solicited public comment from stakeholders. The Workgroup met from July 2021 through December 31, 2021, with the Final Workgroup Report published on March 7, 2022. You will find a copy included in this testimony.

The Self Direction Act of 2022 was passed into law with an implementation date of July 1, 2022 for some components and July 1, 2023 for the remainder.

Participants depend on Individual and Family Goods and Services to pay for both program and administrative costs associated with their Self Direction Person Centered Plan. Funding for these costs comes from direct service rates associated with direct support services such as Person Supports and Community Development Services. Therefore, part of an individual's Annual approved Plan.

It is unfathomable that the DDA under new leadership is acting to undue the will of the people, the work of the Maryland Self Direction Program Work Group and the Maryland State Legislature with so little time to collect data since the implementation of the SDS Act of 1022.

Participants must have access to their full DDA approved budget including Individual and Family Goods and Services which are connected to a need identified in their Person-Centered Plan.

Current DDA policy states people who self-direct their services are allowed the following if they have cost savings in their approved annual budget. Costs are not above and beyond what has been authorized by the DDA.

Allowable Administrative Costs: Recruitment and Advertising
Day to Day Administration

Allowable Goods and Services:

Activities that promote health (such as fitness memberships and items, personal training, aquatics, and horseback riding)

Fees for programs and activities that promote socialization and independence (such as art, music, dance, sports, or other activities of the person's interest).

And a variety of other goods and services listed in the DDA policy on IFDGS dated June 21, 2023

- **If truly concerned about budget utilization and effect on the overall DDA budget, please institute a workgroup to study the issues with stakeholder input and revisit changes next year.**

Thank you for taking the time to read and understand an issue that will have a significant impact on participants with disabilities who self- direct and their families.

Sincerely, Patti Saylor RN MS, CMDN patti.saylor@healthlinkllc.com