

The Honorable Delegate Ben Barnes, Chair  
House Appropriations Committee

Written Testimony for House Bill 352 (HB0352)  
Hearing Scheduled 2/28/2024 at 1 pm

In Opposition

My name is Susan Bosworth from Berlin, MD. I am testifying against this bill, Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act of 2024, as it stands, and request that your Committee **AMEND HB352—THE BRFA—to strike Page 20, lines 8-21**. This section would allow DDA to re-establish a limit on “the dollar amount of individual-directed and family-directed goods and services provided to a recipient. .

This would reverse legislation that Legislators, citizens and advocates worked very hard to pass just two years year. The Self-Direction Act of 2022, passed by unanimous vote, and stated that DDA “may not limit the dollar amount of individual-directed and family-directed goods and services provided to a recipient.”. These services enable families and individuals to receive the help and services needed to be a contributing member of their society. IFDGS funding helps people stay healthy, active, and productively engaged in their communities. IFDGS supports peoples’ independence and helps keep them safe. IFDGS Day-to-day administrative supports aim to help sustain peoples’ ability to self-direct, even when their parents or siblings are not able to help. This is such an important service for these individual’s and their families’ future.

To put arbitrary limits on these services is not at all in the best interest of individuals with disabilities and their families. It certainly wasn’t the intention when the Self-Direction Act of 2022 was passed. These services are outlined in a Person Centered Plan, prepared by the individual and his/her team, where the services that are needed are decided. For DDA then to place an arbitrary limit on what the team recommends does not honor Person Centered Planning.

There is currently a limit on these funds. In order to access funds for these services, they must come from Unallocated Funds in an already approved Individual Budget. Individuals need to use that money that is already allocated to them for any of these services. It is self-limiting, dollar-wise, by their own budget. It is not asking for extra funding. An individual cannot ask for more than they have already been budgeted.

I have two adult children with disabilities, Matthew is 32 and has Cerebral Palsy and Carson is 27 and has Autism. These services allow my children to participate in the community, get vital exercise, and have dental work done that Medicaid declined because there is not an approved Medicaid provider who provides this service. These services also allow us to have an administrative person that we can train to take over helping our adult children to self-direct once we are gone. As parents, we spend many hours a week

managing services for our adult children. We are getting older and one day will not be able to do so. This eases that big worry for many parents and also will keep our loved ones from being the responsibility of the state at a much higher price tag.

Unfortunately, the 2024 Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act (BRFA), recently proposed by the Moore-Miller Administration, would strike this very important provision from Maryland law. This is why I am writing in to request that you amend this bill by removing this section. Please understand the serious detrimental impact this will have on individuals with disabilities and their families if this bill passes without this change.

Sincerely,

Susan Bosworth  
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Submitted 2/27/2024