

WHEREAS, Families receiving occasional caregiver support services are less likely to request institutional care at public expense for an individual with special needs; and

WHEREAS, Caregiver support services reduce family and caregiver stress, enhance family and caregiver coping ability, and strengthen family ability to meet the challenging demands of caring for individuals with special needs; and

WHEREAS, Caregiver support services reduce the risk of abuse and neglect of children, senior citizens, and other vulnerable groups; and

WHEREAS, Coordinated, noncategorical caregiver support services must be available locally to provide reliable short-term relief when it is needed by families and caregivers regardless of where they live in Maryland; now, therefore,

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article 88A - Department of Human Resources

129A.

(A) (1) THERE IS A MARYLAND CAREGIVERS SUPPORT COORDINATING COUNCIL OF MARYLAND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES.

(2) THE PURPOSE OF THE COUNCIL IS TO COORDINATE STATEWIDE PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF FAMILY CAREGIVER SUPPORT SERVICES.

(B) (1) THE COUNCIL SHALL CONSIST OF THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS, APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR:

(I) ~~ONE REPRESENTATIVE~~ TWO REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES;

(II) THREE REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE;

(III) ~~ONE REPRESENTATIVE~~ TWO REPRESENTATIVES ~~ONE REPRESENTATIVE~~ FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF AGING, ONE OF WHOM SHALL BE AN AREA AGENCY ON AGING DIRECTOR;

(IV) ONE REPRESENTATIVE FROM AN AREA AGENCY ON AGING;

~~(IV)~~ (V) ONE REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES;

~~(V)~~ (VI) ONE REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE MARYLAND RESPITE CARE COALITION;

~~(VI)~~ (VII) TWO CONSUMERS OF RESPITE SERVICES;

~~(VII)~~ (VIII) THREE FAMILY CAREGIVERS; AND