

OASIS · AT A GLANCE

# Maryland Advocates Clawed Back \$300 Million in Disability Cuts

A proposed \$457 million cut to the Developmental Disabilities Administration became a \$300 million restoration in ten weeks. The method is documented, repeatable, and almost entirely about timing.

PILLAR: HOW | COMPANION TO BLOG POST B167 | 2-PAGE BRIEF

\$300M

RESTORED IN TEN WEEKS

Of a proposed \$457 million cut, restored March 24, 2025.

How the restoration happened

PROPOSE, MOBILIZE, VOTE

STAGE 1

### The cut is proposed

January 2025. The governor's fiscal 2026 budget proposes \$457 million out of the Developmental Disabilities Administration.

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STAGE 2

### The community shows up

Weeks of lobbying, public testimony, and State House rallies bringing hundreds to Annapolis, coordinated across provider and family organizations.

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STAGE 3

### The committee moves

March 24, 2025. House Appropriations restores \$300 million. About \$157 million in reductions remains, and advocates say so rather than declaring victory.

The ten weeks that decided it

MARYLAND, 2025 SESSION

### From proposal to restoration

Everything that mattered happened inside a single legislative session.

Jan 2025

#### The budget is introduced

A \$457 million reduction to the Developmental Disabilities Administration.

Jan to Mar

#### Sustained pressure

Lobbying, public testimony, and State House rallies bringing hundreds of people to the Capitol.

Mar 4, 2025

#### Supplemental budget

The governor's supplemental helps fund the agency, partly by cutting other programs.

Mar 24, 2025

#### The committee votes

House Appropriations restores \$300 million, with legislative leaders announcing a framework agreement.

What remained

#### About \$157 million

Including the geographic differential and Low-Intensity Support Services cut to \$2 million.

Two weeks left

#### Session continues

Advocates named the partial win honestly and kept the coalition intact.

\$457M

#### The proposed cut

To Maryland's Developmental Disabilities Administration in the fiscal 2026 budget as introduced.

\$157M

#### Still cut

Including Low-Intensity Support Services reduced from \$5.5 million to \$2 million rather than eliminated.

\$200 million

#### The year before

A contemplated fiscal 2025 cut, much of which had already been restored by supplemental budget.

HOW A PARTIAL WIN GETS DESCRIBED

“

*These cuts are painful, but oh my gosh, they were going to be catastrophic. It was such a big day for our community. It represented unprecedented cooperation.*

ANDE KOLP, THE ARC MARYLAND, MARCH 2025.

THE TAKEAWAY

Maryland did not win because it made a better moral argument. It won because it made the argument during the ten weeks when the decision was open.

TURN THE PAGE

The three tactics that transfer, the one that does not, and what a single family can do alone.

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Running the same play

THE CALENDAR IS THE TACTIC

CALENDAR

Find the decision window

☐ Locate the state budget calendar for the year

☐ Find when appropriations subcommittees take up health and human services

☐ Mark every hearing date now

☐ Note when the comment and testimony sign-up opens

☐ Work the window, not the year

COORDINATE

Agree on the ask first

☐ Meet with provider associations before anyone testifies

☐ Agree on two or three asks everyone repeats

☐ Name the same line item and the same dollar figure

☐ Families and providers speaking together cannot be split

☐ One conference call is the highest-return step here

TESTIFY

What effective testimony holds

☐ One person and one day, in ninety seconds

☐ The exact line item and dollar figure

☐ What the cut costs the state elsewhere

☐ A number from a neutral source

☐ Your county, and one clear votable ask

FOLLOW

After the vote

☐ Name exactly what was won and what was lost

☐ Do not call a partial win a total victory

☐ Thank the members who moved, by name

☐ Start on the remainder the same week

☐ Keep the coalition intact for next session

BRING ONE PAGE, NOT A BINDER

The testimony sheet

01  
Person  
One person, one day, ninety seconds of specifics.

02  
Line  
The exact budget line item and dollar figure.

03  
Cost  
What the cut costs elsewhere, with a neutral source.

04  
Ask  
One thing a committee can actually vote on.

YOUR MOVE

Running the Maryland play as one family

1  
Get the calendar  
Find the subcommittee hearing dates and mark them.

2  
Read the summary  
Find the line item that touches your family.

3  
Sign up  
Public testimony is open and three minutes is standard.

4  
Say your county  
So the members from your area know you are theirs.

5  
Submit in writing  
Even if you speak, file a written copy for the record.

Michigan's money runs through more hands than Maryland's does, so winning the appropriation is necessary here and not sufficient. Plan a second phase Maryland did not need.

SOURCES

Maryland Matters. Developmental disability community 'tentatively exuberant' at restored funding, March 24, 2025. Source of the \$457 million, \$300 million, and \$157 million figures and the quoted remarks.

Maryland Matters. Governor's supplemental budget helps fund disabilities agency by cutting other programs, March 4, 2025.

The Arc Maryland. Fiscal 2026 Developmental Disabilities Administration budget advocacy.

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Michigan House Fiscal Agency and Senate Fiscal Agency. Health and Human Services budget summaries and subcommittee schedules.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

JP

Jim Palasty

Jim Palasty is the founder of OASIS for Autism and a single father of an adult autistic daughter in Michigan.