During the 2017 General Assembly (GA) session, DRM followed about 140 bills on a wide range of topics. We focused substantial energy on a package of bills aimed at improving outcomes for young people with disabilities. We are very pleased that ALL of these bills have passed the General Assembly! Gubernatorial action is pending.

HB 425/SB 651 strictly limits out-of-school suspensions for children in pre-K through 2nd grade, requires positive interventions and supports, and authorizes restorative practices in schools.

HB 331/SB 786 creates a task force to review and revise state regulations governing use of seclusion and restraint in schools.

HB 174/SB 710 requires parental consent for specific IEP team proposals (e.g., including restraint or seclusion on a student’s IEP, removing a student from the diploma track), effectively shifting the due process burden of proof.

HB 1287 establishes the Commission on the School-to-Prison Pipeline and Restorative Practices.

HB 456/SB 943 mandates the State Department of Education to develop a dispute resolution process for families of children with disabilities and child care providers.

HB 279/SB 272 grants continuing jurisdiction to the juvenile court in guardianship and child welfare cases involving foster youth with developmental disabilities transitioning to adult services at age 21, to ensure provision of ongoing supports.

Some additional bills that DRM supported, opposed and/or worked on are set forth below; the full bill list can be found on DRM’s website: http://DisabilityRightsMD.org/public-policy.

HB 127 repeals the Board of Review in the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene; DRM put forward amendments to secure due process rights for Medicaid beneficiaries. (Enacted)

HB 448/SB 344 clarifies annual contribution limits for Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) accounts. (Enacted)

HB 516/SB 581 creates a workgroup to make recommendations on the implementation of universal access to prekindergarten in Maryland. (Enacted)

HB 978/SB 871 implements accountability measures and intervention strategies, while protecting public schools from privatization, in response to the federal Every Student Succeeds Act. (Enacted)

SB 571/HB 909 established the Maryland Health Insurance Coverage Protection Commission to monitor federal changes to the Affordable Care Act, Medicaid, Medicare, Children’s Health Program (CHIP) and Maryland All-Payer Model. (Enacted)

HB 180/SB 82 renames the “Department of Health & Mental Hygiene” the “Department of Health.” (Enacted)
HB 197/SB 485 provides grants for technology that allows children with medial conditions to participate remotely in school. (Enacted)

HB 644/SB 180 provides a tax credit for construction of accessibility modifications. (Enacted)

HB 1/SB 230 requires employers with 15 or more employees to offer paid sick leave. (Passed GA, Gubernatorial action pending)

HB 269/SB 531 codifies the Housing Navigator & Aftercare Program to assist people experiencing a housing crisis to obtain and maintain permanent housing. (Passed GA, Gubernatorial action pending)

HB 580/SB 476 “Keep the Door Open Act” & HB 1329/SB 967 “Heroin & Opioid Prevention Effort” – the KTDO Act mandated annual rate adjustments for community mental health service providers; its provisions passed as part of the HOPE Act, a broad measure that also requires establishment of behavioral health crisis treatment centers, expansion of the statewide 24/7 crisis hotline, a plan to increase substance use treatment in jails and prisons, discharge protocols for hospitals, and more. (Passed GA, Gubernatorial action pending)

HB 631/SB 415 prohibits price gouging by manufacturers or wholesale distributors of off-patent or generic prescription drugs.

HB 971/SB 872 creates the James W. Hubbard Inclusive Education Grant Program (in honor of a DRM Board member) to provide higher education opportunities for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. (Passed GA, Gubernatorial action pending)

HB 972/SB 811 removes the sunset date on court filing fees that provide revenue to the Maryland Legal Services Corporation. (Passed GA, Gubernatorial action pending)

HB 1291/SB 856 increases the amount of Abandoned Property Fund revenue provided to Maryland Legal Services Corporation annually from 1.5 to 2 million dollars. (Passed GA, Gubernatorial action pending)

HB 172 /SB 728 would have prohibited housing discrimination based on source of income. (Failed)

HB 416/SB 442 would have required the state to conserve a portion of foster youths’ financial resources for the benefit of these individuals as they reach transition age. (Failed)

HB 666/SB 437 would have required review of prescription drug transparency, notification and pricing. (Failed)

HB 689/SB 813 would have required certain rental assistance programs to continue to subsidies for four years. (Failed)

HB 723/SB 694 would have repealed gubernatorial veto authority of parole board decisions regarding prisoners serving life terms. (Failed)

HB 808/SB 660 would have enacted a Hospital Patients’ Bill of Rights. (Failed)

HB 903/SB 705 would have authorized an award of attorney’s fees and expenses to a prevailing plaintiff in claims against a state or local government for violations of the Maryland Constitution or Declaration of Rights. (Failed)
HB 984/SB 475 would have required specified annual appropriations to serve people with developmental disabilities on the waiting list in the “crisis resolution” category. (Failed)

HB 1001/SB 1015 would have strictly limited use of restrictive housing in prisons and jails, creates a task force to review and make recommendations regarding such use, and mandates safeguards for when the practice is used. (Failed)

HB 1175/SB 834 would have enacted a state court remedy to include money damages for cases of discrimination by places of public accommodation. (Failed)

HB 1237 would have waived the costs associated with obtaining expungements under certain circumstances. (Failed)

HB 1487 would have made several Rent Court procedural reforms. (Failed)

HB 1613/SB 876 would have enacted the Maryland Disability Integration Act. (Failed)

SB 532 would have established regulatory requirements for temporary family health care structures in Maryland. (Failed)

HB 203/SB 852 would have amended the state’s accessibility code. (Failed)

HB 370/SB 354 would have implemented physician aid in dying with minimal safeguards. (Failed)

HB 539 & HB 532/SB 1133 would have imposed new voter ID requirements. (Failed)

HB 650/SB 691 would have expanded beyond Constitutional permissibility the circumstances under which a criminal court could order involuntary medication for individuals found Incompetent to Stand Trial (IST) or Not Criminally Responsible (NCR) and committed to a state psychiatric facility. (Failed)

HB 878/SB 704 would have created a statewide charter school authority to make charter schools into discrete school districts. (Failed)

HB 1009 would have authorized the emergency petition and subsequent involuntary commitment to a psychiatric facility of an individual who experienced a drug overdose, but is not diagnosed with a mental illness. (Failed)

SB 618 would have established a statewide “Achievement School District.” (Failed)

SB 706 would have expedited tenant evictions under certain circumstances and shortened the period for filing an appeal of the eviction. (Failed)

HJ 9/SJ 7 expressed disagreement with the repeal of the federal Affordable Care Act. (Passed)

DRM engages in legislative advocacy using funds we raise through the generous donations of supporters like you. Please consider a making a donation of any amount today to ensure that DRM can continue to be a strong voice for the disability community – thank you!