

**STATEMENT OF THE ARC MARYLAND AND THE MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF
COMMUNITY SERVICES ON GOVERNOR WES MOORE'S STATE OF THE STATE
ADDRESS**

Members of Maryland's developmental disabilities (DD) community remain deeply disappointed in Governor Moore's budget decisions that cut \$200 million in general funds, resulting in a devastating \$457 million (state and federal) cut for FY26. This represents a 22% reduction in funding for critical DD services and supports for Marylanders with developmental disabilities such as autism, cerebral palsy, and Down syndrome.

As Governor Moore delivered his State of the State address today, Laura Howell, chief executive officer of the Maryland Association of Community Service said "Today, the state of our community has never been more fearful, with the damage that will be done to the lives of more than 18,000 Marylanders with developmental disabilities."

In his address, Governor Moore urged against complacency when the rights and humanity of Marylanders are at risk. We agree with this sentiment. Said Ande Kolp, executive director of The Arc Maryland, "Disability rights are human rights, and those rights have never been more threatened. If not restored, these funding cuts will weaken and destabilize community supports for Marylanders with developmental disabilities for years to come."

As we demonstrated on Monday, February 3 – with more than 1,000 people showing up to a State House rally on three days' notice – we will continue to advocate to protect vulnerable Marylanders from these damaging cuts.

We call on Governor Moore and our legislative leaders to pass a budget that supports our neighbors with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. We agree with the governor's words: "We need to invest in our greatest strength and that is our people."

