



**GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY BOARD FOR  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS RELAY**

Wes Moore  
*Governor*

Alfred Sonnenstrahl  
*Chair*

Aruna Miller  
*Lieutenant Governor*

Darrin Smith  
*Vice Chair*

January 1, 2024

The Honorable William C. Ferguson IV  
President  
Senate of Maryland  
H-107, State House  
State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones  
Speaker  
House of Delegates  
H-101, State House  
State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

Dear President Ferguson and Speaker Jones:

On behalf of the Governor's Advisory Board for Telecommunications Relay (GABTR or The Board), I am pleased to submit the annual report for the 2023 calendar year, pursuant to Human Services Article § 7-803(d) and in accordance with State Government Article § 2-1257 .

The Board met four times in 2023, receiving reports from Telecommunications Access of Maryland ("TAM") staff, representatives from the Maryland Relay service provider, Hamilton, and outside presenters.

With the Board's guidance, the Maryland Accessible Technology ("MAT") program developed and launched the DeafBlind Communication Facilitators ("CF") program, with the first facilitated call occurring on December 17, 2021. Under the CF program, DeafBlind Marylanders with specially trained communication facilitators to facilitate access to telecommunications relay services. When a DeafBlind caller makes a request, the MAT program sends an assigned communication facilitator to the DeafBlind user's preferred location at their preferred time and the facilitator will interpret the call for the DeafBlind caller.

In its first year of operation, the CF program covered 63 assignments, followed by 229 assignments in 2023, its second year. We are pleased with the growth of this new program and are excited for what the future brings.

Sincerely,

*Alfred Sonnenstrahl*

Alfred Sonnenstrahl  
GABTR Chair