

Brain Injury Association of Virginia Virginia Alliance of Brain Injury Service Providers 2021 Legislative Needs Statement

WHAT:

\$1,000,000 to expand specialized community based support services

PATRONS AND ITEM NUMBERS:

- Del Emily Brewer: 339 #1h
- Sen Monty Mason: 339 #5s

WHY:

According to estimates from the Brain Injury Association of Virginia, nearly 300,000 Virginians are disabled as a result of brain injury. The Virginia Department of Health states approximately 28,000 Virginians sustain a brain injury each year. In FY20, eight state funded programs were able to meet the community based services needs of 9,000 people with brain injury; roughly 3% of those with moderate to severe brain injury who would benefit from those services.

Several programs have waiting lists for Case Management services, some as long as 2 years. Day programs, clubhouses, telehealth initiatives, and resource coordination programs are also struggling to meet existing demand in the face of insufficient funding. The COVID pandemic and the opioid epidemic are both known to be risk factors for brain injury and the confluence of these events is expected to drive the demand for this service and the need for additional brain injury support services to all-time highs.

This funding would facilitate the hiring of at least 15 staff to address existing waiting lists, enhance virtual programming, expand partnerships, and develop and implement creative responses to the high-intensity needs of Virginians with brain injury.

HOW:

Through a DARS Appropriation and existing contract processes, funding would allow each existing community based brain injury programs to hire new staff to enhance and/or expand services or service areas.