

Larry Hogan
Governor

Betty Jean Dodds
Chair

Boyd Rutherford
Lieutenant Governor

January 1, 2015

The Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr.
President
Senate of Maryland
H-107, State House
State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

The Honorable Michael E. Busch
Speaker
House of Delegates
H-101, State House
State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

Dear President Miller and Speaker Busch:

In accordance with 3A-503(d) of the State Finance and Procurement Article, I am pleased to submit the annual Governor's Advisory Board for Telecommunications Relay (GABTR) report for calendar year 2014

The members of GABTR, Telecommunications Access of Maryland (TAM) staff, and representatives from the current Maryland Relay provider, Hamilton Relay, were scheduled to meet four (4) times during 2014. The meetings were scheduled in February, May, September, and December. However, the May 2014 meeting was cancelled due to an unavoidable delay in the completion of renovations in the meeting venue.

During these public meetings, discussions were held regarding quality and trends in relay services, technology, current outreach efforts and future outreach needs to ensure that Maryland citizens are aware of the services provided by the State of Maryland.

Some major topics presented during CY 2014 meetings were:

- A representative from a prospective new Captioned Relay provider demoed their product that has been filed with the FCC but not yet approved.
- The results of the billing audit of the Maryland Relay provider were reported with no issues. This audit covered May 2007 – May 2013
- Expansion of the Relay center to utilize 2 floors and add operators to both the TRS and CTS operator processing areas. - providing economic benefit to Alleghany County.
- Text to 9-1-1 development continues.
- Maryland Relay began providing Video Assisted Speech to Speech

During GABTR meetings, TAM staff provides information related to regulatory updates from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) that may impact TAM's future fiscal and/or operational obligations for current and newer modes of relay.

The interactive structure of the GABTR meetings allows for maximum feedback from consumers as well as the dissemination of vital information to citizens who are now, or could be, users of Maryland Relay. This venue further allows GABTR and TAM to solicit feedback on the quality of service and the communications needs of the deaf, hard of hearing and speech-disabled communities. These communities are served through our Telecommunications Relay Service

(TRS) – Maryland Relay, the Maryland Captioned Telephone Relay Service, NewsLine Reading Service for the Blind and the Maryland Accessible Telecommunication (MAT) equipment distribution program, all of which are managed by TAM.

Keeping these issues in the forefront, GABTR looks forward to working with the TAM office to continue providing exemplary services to the citizens of Maryland.

Sincerely,

Betty Jean Dodds

Betty Jean Dodds
Chair