



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

Larry Hogan
Governor

Betty Jean Dodds
Chair

Boyd K. Rutherford
Lieutenant Governor

Alfred Sonnenstrahl
Vice Chair

February 1, 2022

The Honorable William C. Ferguson
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 Miller 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 on the boards activities for the 2020 calendar year, pursuant to Human Services Article § 7-803(d) and in accordance with State Government Article § 2-1257 .

The Board met three times in 2020, receiving reports from Telecommunications Access of Maryland ("TAM") staff, representatives from the Maryland Relay service provider, Hamilton, and outside presenters. In consultation with the Board, TAM renewed 5-years contract with their service provider, Hamilton Communications, which effectively began on March 2020. In this contract, TAM introduced two offerings with our telecommunications relay services program: Real-time Text (RTT) and Remote Conference Captioning (RCC).

RTT is a TTY-compatible technology that allows for simultaneous, real-time transmission of characters as they are typed. In late 2016, the FCC passed a Report and Order in which it formally set into motion a long-term *Transition from TTY to Real-Time Text Technology* [31 *FCC Rcd 13568 (16)*]. The Board is proud that Maryland Relay is the first state to adopt RTT into their telecommunications relay services programs, leading states from across the country in transitioning away from legacy TTY technology.

RCC is a service offering real-time captioning through the use of Communications Access Realtime Translation (CART) service, allowing individuals in Maryland who have difficulty using a standard phone to participate in remote conference calls to benefit from real-time captioning of the conference.

On July 1st, 2020, TAM began the process of transitioning from the Maryland Department of Information Technology (DoIT) to the Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDoD). With the



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transition away from DoIT, TAM moved forward with the process of rebranding our logos and supporting marketing materials to reflect our new home within the government of the State of Maryland.

GABTR looks forward to continued work with TAM and MDoD, and is excited to see what the next year brings.

Sincerely,

Alfred Sonnenstrahl

Alfred Sonnenstrahl
Acting Chair