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Committee

Executive Nominations Committee

Joint Committee on Ending Homelessness

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Support SB 725: Maryland Department of Health - Public Health Outreach Programs - Cognitive Impairment, Alzheimer's Disease, and Other Types of Dementia

Why SB725 Is Needed:

We need SB725 to help our citizens who are dealing with cognitive impairments, Alzheimer's Disease and other types of dementia:

- There were at least 110,000 individuals in Maryland who are 65 and older who have been diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease. This number is estimated to increase to at least 130,000 by the year 2025 -- a 18.2 percent change,
- Over \$1 billion of Medicaid costs in 2018 went toward care for people with Alzheimer's in our State, and
- Only 7 percent of seniors across the country get assessments for cognitive impairments as reported by the Alzheimer's Association.

What SB725 Would Do:

SB725 would require the Department of Health to partner with the Department of Aging, the Virginia Jones Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Council, and the Alzheimer's Association include information and education about a variety of health outreach programs related to cognitive disorders in current programs.

The outreach programs would address education of health care providers and programs to increase general understanding and awareness of these types of disorders.

Health care provider education would focus on:

- Importance of early detection
- Validated detection tools
- Value of Medicare annual wellness visits for cognitive health, and
- Medicare planning billing codes for individuals with cognitive impairments

General education programs would focus on:

- Early warning signs
- Value of early detection and diagnosis, and
- Ways to help reduce the risk of cognitive decline especially in diverse communities where there are individuals who have greater risk of developing Alzheimer's and other types of dementia

Alzheimer's and Related Disorders Efforts:

- Past recommendations by both the Maryland Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorder Commission and the Virginia I. Jones Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Council have included goals for the Department of Health to enhance public awareness and support early identification efforts.
- Public health information efforts play a powerful role in curbing harmful behaviors and promoting good ones especially among at-risk communities and individuals.
- The Department of Health would need to fund -- likely via contract -- support for this effort. Costs are estimated to be about \$76,000 over 2 fiscal years and with no impact on revenues.

A favorable report on SB725 will:

- Help our citizens get more information regarding resources as well as early detection about age related cognitive impairments.
- Help our health care provide improved use of early detection as well as appropriate ways to code it for insurance coverage.
- Enhance goals suggested by past commissions and the Virginia I. Jones Council.