



Maryland Senior Citizens Action Network

MSCAN

AARP Maryland

*Alzheimer's
Association,
Maryland Chapters*

*Baltimore Jewish
Council*

Catholic Charities

*Central Maryland
Ecumenical Council*

Church of the Brethren

*Episcopal Diocese of
Maryland*

*Housing Opportunities
Commission of
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*Jewish Community
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*Lutheran Office on
Public Policy in
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*Maryland Association of
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*Maryland Catholic
Conference*

*Mental Health
Association of Maryland*

Mid-Atlantic LifeSpan

*National Association of
Social Workers,
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Presbytery of Baltimore

*The Coordinating
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Testimony in Support of SB 670 - Department of Aging - Assisted Living Program Subsidies - Determinations

Finance and Budget and Taxation Committees February 19, 2020

The Maryland Senior Citizens Action Network (MSCAN) is a statewide coalition of advocacy groups, service providers, faith-based and mission-driven organizations that supports policies that meet the housing and care needs of Maryland's low and moderate-income seniors.

MSCAN enthusiastically supports SB 670 for its potential to positively impact the lives of low-income seniors who deserve quality, licensed assisted living facilities. The bill would increase the Senior Assisted Living Group Home Subsidy for the first time in almost 20 years. The bill mandates an increase to \$1,000 from \$650 while also tying the subsidy to the consumer price index, ensuring that it will increase overtime as inflation occurs. To be eligible for the subsidy, the older adult's net monthly income may not be higher than 60 percent of the State median income and assets may be no greater than \$11,000 if single or \$14,000 if a couple. The subsidy may cover the difference between the net monthly income of the resident after a \$60/month personal allowance deduction, and the approved monthly assisted living fee. Further, for the assisted living facility to be eligible, it must be licensed with the state and have between 4 and 16 beds in its facility.

MSCAN strongly urges an increase in the subsidy amount for this cost-effective program which is vital in meeting the needs of Maryland's dramatically growing senior population. The subsidies are paid from State funds on behalf of eligible residents who are unable to afford the cost of assisted living and might otherwise be in nursing facilities. The subsidy supports the cost of services provided in assisted living, including meals, personal care and 24-hour supervision for elderly residents who are frail and unable to live independently. In 2018 this subsidy helped almost 400 seniors afford licensed assisted living facilities, likely keeping them out of nursing facilities, which costs almost \$90,000 dollars a year, or 13 million dollars for 150 seniors..

MSCAN respectfully requests a favorable report on SB670. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.