

HB 1163 Home- and Community-Based Waiver Services - Alterations and Task Force
House Health and Government Operations Committee
March 5, 2020
SUPPORT

Good Afternoon Chairwoman Pendergrass and Members of the House Health and Government Operations Committee. I am Tammy Bresnahan; I am the director of advocacy for AARP MD. AARP MD represents more than 897,000 members in Maryland and overwhelming our members want to age in place and support **HB 1163 Home- and Community-Based Waiver Services - Alterations and Task Force**. We thank Delegate Cullison for sponsoring this very important piece of legislation.

AARP is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, nationwide organization that helps people turn their goals and dreams into real possibilities, strengthens communities and fights for the issues that matter most to families such as healthcare, employment and income security, retirement planning, affordable utilities and protection from financial abuse.

AARP believes that state governments should carefully assess their Long Term Services and Support Systems (LTSS) and their ability to serve people in the most integrated setting the individual chooses.

AARP also believes that the State should:

- apply the principle that consumer choice and quality of life should drive the entire LTSS system;
- allocate a greater proportion of Medicaid funding for HCBS instead of nursing facility care;
- provide potential consumers with viable options for HCBS that will help divert people from nursing facility care either before admission or shortly thereafter; and
- Restructure their nursing facility Medicaid reimbursement system to ensure that it does not sustain excess capacity.

AARP believes Marylanders should be able to “age-in-place” in their own homes and be provided services to avoid an unnecessary nursing home admission. That is not happening--the government continues to pay their Medicaid bills in the most expensive setting, when people really just want help to stay in their own homes. It is time for the Maryland legislature to act to make up for lost time if it wants to give Marylanders the ability to age in place.

We ask the Committee for a favorable report on HB 1163. For questions please contact Tammy Bresnahan at tbresnahan@aarp.org or by calling 410-302-8451.