



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
Montgomery County*

*Jewish Community
Relations Council of
Greater Washington*

*Lutheran Office on
Public Policy in
Maryland*

*Maryland Association of
Area Agencies on Aging*

*Maryland Catholic
Conference*

*Mental Health
Association of Maryland*

Mid-Atlantic LifeSpan

*National Association of
Social Workers,
Maryland Chapter*

Presbytery of Baltimore

*The Coordinating
Center*

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Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 28: *Home-and Community-Based Services – Waiver – Participation and Application* Senate Finance Committee January 25, 2022

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, health, and quality of care needs of Maryland's low and moderate-income seniors. MSCAN strongly supports Senate Bill 28.

Senate Bill 28 seeks to increase participation in waiver services by ensuring that Maryland provides waiver services to **at least** 7500 participants. Currently, only about 4500 participants are currently receiving services, even though approximately 22,000 are awaiting services on the waiting list. To enroll 7500 participants, Senate Bill 28 requires the Maryland Department of Health to send applications to individuals on the waiting list or registry monthly, dependent on the number of individuals currently on the waiting list or registry.

Over the years, several bills have been introduced before the General Assembly attempting to increase access to waiver services, but access remains an issue. Too often, individuals request waiver services but instead languish on the waiting list. Ultimately, many either end up in more costly nursing homes or spend their time in and out of hospitals, both at an increased cost to the State. Maryland must ensure that Maryland's aging and disabled residents have access to affordable services and housing that allow them the opportunity to "age-in-place" within the community. In addition, it should be noted that access to services does not automatically translate to receiving services. Maryland must also ensure that the applications can be processed in a timely manner so that once removed from the waiting list an applicant can begin receiving services expeditiously.

Therefore, MSCAN strongly supports Senate Bill 28 and urges a favorable vote.