

Testimony of the Alzheimer's Association Greater Maryland and National Capital Area Chapters
HB 378 - Maryland Health Care Commission – Palliative Care Services – Workgroup
Position: Favorable

Chair Pendergrass and Vice-Chair Pena-Melnyk,

The Alzheimer's Association writes in strong support of House Bill 378, which requires the Maryland Health Care Commission to convene a workgroup of interested stakeholders to study palliative care services in the State; requires the Commission to submit an interim report to the Governor and General Assembly by July 1, 2023, and a final report by November 1, 2023 to include findings and recommendations to improve palliative care services in the State and the need for any legislative initiatives.

Effective palliative care is critical to improve the quality of life of individuals with chronic disease, including the 110,000 Marylanders with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia along with their over 238,000 caregivers. Palliative can be helpful for symptom management, assistance with decision making, and optimal end of life care. In particular, many families are at risk because they do not fully understand the progression and severity of the disease. Individuals with Alzheimer's—and their caregivers or loved ones helping manage the disease—can often have a symptom burden that is longer lasting, including: pain, anxiety, and significant behavioral changes. When done right, palliative care can encourage a supported decision-making model, and offer a whole-person approach to managing this cruel noncurative disease.¹

Thank you for your time and the Alzheimer's Association urges a favorable report on this bill.

¹ Sorrell, Jeanne, "Palliative Care for People with Alzheimer's Disease." Nursing Philosophy. 2008.
https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/48377028/Palliative_care_for_people_with_Alzheime20160828-26125-1efqsl-with-cover-page-v2.pdf?Expires=1645463487&Signature=Vg0~-ulhH6cN7-sXwit-Svp2QnVck~mXSJ1L-EIMNM34x3KwHSne55F5m9la4p4O31~OjCN6l-4jIJQT8Ujqqzoaoo4NoBfxOrXVBXyD1I5GFx1JuLYfV8llod7I9jCdyZa9nTLbx8I3TPOxquOc2jeAAMe3oBKJ8ZUjP8dLI1fYwm83p6WB-iNc-Om5LuLr6spH83XnpF0v2erz4gJlFFNtillkPVQAVMJk~2WmOO8hF-CqBG-YQTwsbB-NZZFEHmghSgDEZnM0BWv2QMJecOcP~vn-OTnWhbEz7Vw0d3oMRxbinUIKQPMXcx1sylix4PTdekTKknyWm1wa~lqs~g__&Key-Pair-Id=APKAJLOHF5GGSLRBV4ZA