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HB 1034 - State Board of Examiners of Nursing Home Administrators – Renaming and Licensure of Assisted Living Managers (FWA)

Testimony of Delegate Joseline A. Peña-Melnyk

Chairman Pendergrass, and fellow committee members. I am pleased to present House Bill (HB) 1034. This legislation will provide oversight to assisted living managers in an effort to provide a standard quality of care to all Marylanders residing in these facilities. This bill will ensure that these managers are dependable and dedicated to providing quality services.

Maryland is home to more than 600 assisted living facilities throughout the state, providing residents with attentive caregivers, healthcare, and access to local activities and social opportunities.¹ Adults often turn to assisted living facilities when they are incapable of living safely alone and require support for daily tasks.

This bill will play a central role in setting and enforcing standards of quality for formal long-term care in assisted living facilities. Currently, if there is a violation, the facility is sanctioned. Nothing happens to those in charge of the facility. These managers can go on to be in charge of multiple facilities, putting countless residents at risk. We have a responsibility to hold managers accountable for the integrity and quality of care provided to residents of these locations.

¹ <https://www.seniorliving.org/maryland/>

Assisted living management will benefit from a Board that will provide regulated, standardized oversight and a formal way to manage complaints. Our loved ones deserve to be overseen by a manager that is reputable and held to a high standard. The oversight of a Board will ensure that these managers are focusing on what matters most - the people in their care. We need a way to know that assisted living facility residents in our state - parents, grandparents, friends, family members - are receiving the quality of care they deserve, regardless of the facility in which they reside.

Over the past four years, the District of Columbia and 42 states, or 84 percent of states, have reported changes that affect assisted living communities.² These are changes to the licensing requirements, to other regulations that also apply to assisted living providers, or to both. Maryland would join 15 other states, including Delaware, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania that have established requirements, licensure, or Board oversight for assisted living facility managers.

During the past two months, we have worked diligently with advocates and representatives of the industry. I happy to accept the amendments proposed by LifeSpan Network and the Health Facilities Association of Maryland (HFAM). These include increasing the number of assisted living managers on the Board, standardizing the training, education, and grandfathering provision requirements to those currently specified under Section 19-1807 of the Health General Article, and requiring an implementation timeline report to this Committee. It is with great honor that we accept these amendments as an exceptional representation of compromise and collaboration.

Thank you for the opportunity to present House Bill 1034. I respectfully request a favorable report.

² https://www.ahcanca.org/Assisted-Living/Policy/Documents/2019_reg_review.pdf