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**SB 230 Residential Service Agencies - Employee Registry
Senate Finance Committee
Favorable with Amendments
February 9, 2023**

Good afternoon Chair Griffith and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name Tammy Bresnahan, Senior Director of Advocacy for AARP Maryland. AARP Maryland is a proud member of the Caring Across Maryland coalition supporting a package of bills to bolster quality of care in long term care settings. We would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak in support with sponsor amendments of SB 230 Residential Services Agencies—Employee Registry.

SB 230 requires the Maryland Department of Health to establish and maintain a registry of each employee of a residential service agency who provides personal care services and it also requires each residential service agency to submit information about that worker to the Department.

The care provided in long-term services and supports (LTSS) settings is only as good as the personnel who provide it. Workforce challenges are prevalent in the LTSS industry. They need to be addressed swiftly if the nation is to respond to the growing need for high-quality care. Lack of staff, inadequate training, and insufficient bilingual workers and workers sensitive to different cultures are all serious problems.

Having a competent direct service workforce will improve the quality of care and the quality of life for individuals who need LTSS. Government and providers of long-term services and supports (LTSS) use various approaches to promote service quality and protect consumers' rights. These include licensing and enforcement, strong ombudsman advocacy, accreditation, quality assurance, and other quality improvement initiatives. In addition, they can guarantee consumers' right to bring legal action.

AARP MD believes the state should establish and maintain a home care worker registry of all individuals currently employed by a home care agency and the training they have completed to meet the varying needs of Maryland's aging population.

The Registry will capture training and certifications of personal care workers employed by a residential service agency. This will help capture information if the workforce is adequately trained and supported to meet the varying and diverse needs of Marylanders who need home care services.

For these reasons, we ask the Committee for a favorable report on SB 230. If you have questions or comments, please contact Tammy Bresnahan at tbresnahan@arp.org or by calling 410-302-8451.