

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 614
Department of Aging - Dementia Care Navigation Programs

It is very encouraging to see how many Delegates understand the necessity of this Bill.

Dementia is a condition we fear because we see ourselves, once vibrant and productive persons, winding up in a fetal position in a nursing home. It is the dreaded disease that has no cure.

This Bill establishes a central office to coordinate, administer, and deliver services for dementia care. It is those programs and services I am depending on to keep me as functional as possible, as long as possible.

I believe when we see the number of direct contacts each dementia care program has, we will be shocked. We need this information to understand how enormous this problem is and what additional steps need to be taken.

I need to address the annual \$2,400,00 budget appropriation. It may seem like an additional burden on taxpayers but consider the annual cost of Medicaid nursing home care. Yes, that is where most people are put when families can no longer take care of their needs and that is how most nursing home care is financed - by Medicaid. Components of the Dementia Care Navigation Program will lessen the time people will have to spend in facility care.

We owe it to our citizens to not let another year go by without taking action, but to take action this year.

I trust the members of this Committee will agree with me and give this bill a favorable vote.

Thank you.

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