



Managed by LifeSpan



TO: The Honorable Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk, Chair
Members, House Health and Government Operations Committee
The Honorable Bonnie Cullison

FROM: Danna L. Kauffman
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DATE: February 23, 2023

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 614 – *Department of Aging – Dementia Care Coordinator and Dementia Care Navigation Programs*

On behalf of the LifeSpan Network, the Maryland Association of Adult Day Services, and the Maryland- National Capital Homecare Association, we respectfully **support** House Bill 614, which establishes a Dementia Care Coordinator and a dementia care navigation program within the Maryland Department of Aging.

Individuals aged sixty and older remain the fastest growing segment of the population. The percentage of Marylanders over the age of sixty will rise from 18% in 2015 to 25% in 2030 with individuals between the ages of 80-84 being the fastest growing segment of the population.¹ As such, the number of individuals with dementia and Alzheimer's disease is also expected to increase. More than 130,000 Marylanders are currently living with dementia or Alzheimer's disease whose main support is family caregivers who may also suffer from their own health conditions.

These caregivers need our support. Maryland must do better in planning for the needs of this growing segment of the population and the development of a dementia care navigation program will assist consumers in helping develop plans for their family members and connecting them with community resources. With greater access to resources, more individuals will be able to remain at home with their families rather than in more costly settings.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable vote on House Bill 614.

¹ Maryland Department of Aging 2017-2020 State Plan on Aging (page 10)