



TESTIMONY BEFORE THE
HOUSE HEALTH AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
February 23, 2022
House Bill 614: Department of Aging - Dementia Care Coordinator
and Dementia Care Navigation Programs
Written Testimony Only

POSITION: FAVORABLE

On behalf of the members of the Health Facilities Association of Maryland (HFAM), we appreciate the opportunity to express our support for House Bill 614. HFAM represents skilled nursing centers and assisted living communities in Maryland, as well as associate businesses that offer products and services to healthcare providers. Our members provide services and employ individuals in nearly every jurisdiction of the state.

House Bill 614 establishes the position of Dementia Care Coordinator in the Department of Aging to oversee dementia care navigation programs; requires the Coordinator to train the staff of dementia care navigation programs, disseminate best practices and submit a report, by October 1, 2024 and each year thereafter, to the Governor, the Speaker of the House and President of the Senate on the services provided; and requires the Department to publish a certain report on its website.

There are approximately 110,000 people aged 65 or older living with dementia in Maryland and that number is expected to increase 18% by 2025, according to the Maryland Department of Health. Tens of thousands of these Marylanders are cared for in skilled nursing and rehabilitation centers or assisted living communities and even more are cared for at home by family caregivers.

Dementia care programs and resources are incredibly important to improving and enhancing the quality of life for those living with dementia, as well as their families and caregivers. These types of services can help individuals and families with a dementia diagnosis, assist with planning for the future, identify resources, and navigate care decisions.

Given the COVID-19 pandemic, aging demographics, and the ongoing healthcare workforce shortage, it is more important than ever that all stakeholders come together to advance public policy that enhances the quality of life for Marylanders living with dementia and provide support to their families and caregivers.

For these reasons we request a favorable report from the Committee on House Bill 614.

Submitted by:

Joseph DeMattos, Jr.
President and CEO
(410) 290-5132