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**HB 189 Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Provider Agencies and Personal Care Aides – Wage Reports**  
**Senate Finance Committee**  
**FAVORABLE**  
**March 20, 2024**

Good afternoon, Chair Beidle and members of the Senate Finance Committee. I am Tammy Bresnahan, Senior Director of Advocacy 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. AARP MD represents more than two million Marylanders 50 and over. We would like to thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 189 Maryland Medical Assistance Program-Provider Agencies and Personal Care Aids-Reimbursement. We thank Delegate Lewis for sponsoring this important piece of legislation.

AARP is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, nationwide organization that helps people aged 50 and above, strengthens communities and fights for the issues that matter most to families, such as health care, employment and income security, retirement planning, affordable utilities, and protection from financial abuse.

HB 189 requires each residential service agency (RSA), by September 1, 2025, and annually thereafter, to submit a report to the Maryland Department of Labor (MDL) documenting the RSA's average wage rate and highest and lowest wage rates for personal care aides (PCAs)

AARP believes that living wages and salaries should be commensurate with comparable salaries in the state and with the time, skill, and effort required to render high-quality services and supports. Medicaid reimbursement rates should be rebased and updated regularly to consider relevant economic and financial information, including provider costs. State governments should require pass-throughs (i.e., using additional LTSS funding) or other mechanisms to increase compensation for direct-care workers.

In addition, there should be adequate accountability procedures, such as audits, to ensure that reimbursement increases designated for staffing costs are used for that purpose. And lastly State governments should document the shortage of workers and their training needs, and support research to identify effective ways to address these problems and create a sustained high-quality workforce.

For these reasons, we ask the Committee for a favorable report on HB 189. If you have questions or comments, please contact Tammy Bresnahan at [tbresnahan@aarp.org](mailto:tbresnahan@aarp.org) or by calling 410-302-8451.

