

Testimony before Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
February 6, 2024

Senate Bill 270 - Adult Protective Services - Review Boards - Membership and Terms  
SUPPORT

On behalf of the National Association of Social Workers, Maryland Chapter (NASW-MD) Committee on Aging, we would like to express our support for Senate Bill 270 - Adult Protective Services - Review Boards - Membership and Terms.

We support this bill because it will streamline board membership from eleven to eight board members, maintaining the interdisciplinary nature of this important oversight committee, while ensuring a quorum and making it easier to recruit and maintain the full membership of the board.

The Adult Public Guardianship Review Boards in Maryland were established in 1984 to review public guardianship cases and ensure the well-being of adults under public guardianship. These boards consist of professionals and laypersons appointed by local governments, including physicians, lawyers, disability professionals, and representatives from relevant agencies. Adult Public Guardianship Review Boards are volunteer, interdisciplinary teams that review all guardianship cases held by public agencies including local departments of social services and the area agencies on aging. The boards meet regularly to evaluate the health and welfare of the individuals under guardianship and make recommendations to the court regarding the continuation, modification, or termination of guardianship.

The proposed legislation alters the membership requirements of the Adult Public Guardianship Review Board and clarifies recruitment responsibilities. This bill proposes streamlining board membership from eleven to eight members and outlines the following:

- 1) Changing the requirement of two lay persons to one;
- 2) Removing the Registered Nurse Position and including it as an alternative to section 1A which says: "1 shall be a physician's assistant, nurse practitioner, or physician who is not a psychiatrist;" and
- 3) Combining the position of the person with a disability with the professional in the field of disabilities so that either position will fill the requirement.

We believe these changes will enhance recruitment and maintain the multidisciplinary membership of the Adult Public Guardianship Review Boards to be effective in protecting the rights and welfare of the vulnerable adults they oversee. We ask that you give a favorable report to SB 270.

Respectfully submitted,

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