



# *Maryland Senior Citizens Action Network*

## **MSCAN**

*AARP Maryland*

*Alzheimer's  
Association,  
Maryland Chapters*

*Baltimore Jewish  
Council*

*Catholic Charities*

*Central Maryland  
Ecumenical Council*

*Church of the Brethren*

*Episcopal Diocese of  
Maryland*

*Housing Opportunities  
Commission of  
Montgomery County*

*Jewish Community  
Relations Council of  
Greater Washington*

*Lutheran Office on  
Public Policy in  
Maryland*

*Maryland Association of  
Area Agencies on Aging*

*Maryland Catholic  
Conference*

*Mental Health  
Association of Maryland*

*Mid-Atlantic LifeSpan*

*NAACAP- Maryland*

*National Association of  
Social Workers,  
Maryland Chapter*

*Presbytery of Baltimore*

*The Coordinating  
Center*

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## **Testimony in Support of SB 223 – Department of Aging – Social Connections Program - Establishment Senate Finance Committee January 22, 2025**

The Maryland Senior Citizens Action Network (MSCAN) is a statewide coalition of advocacy groups, service providers, faith-based and mission-driven organizations that supports policies that meet the housing and care needs of Maryland's low and moderate-income seniors.

MSCAN commends the Department of Aging for leading the Governor's Longevity Ready Maryland Initiative as our state prepares for unprecedented growth in our senior population. To meet the needs of this wave of elders while recognizing the fiscal realities we currently face, SB 223 proposes to embrace technology to enhance important human service programs without additional cost.

SB 223 will expand and enrich the original Senior Call-Check Service and Notification Program which offered a daily robo-call to seniors who signed up for the service. The program basically determined if the participant could answer the phone – if not, a designated contact was notified.

The new Social Connections Program will do much more to prevent social isolation. Using telephone calls, text messages, web-based, virtual, video, or in-person communication the program will maintain regular contact with participants to keep them connected with their neighborhoods and communities.

The Social Connections Program will partner with local, volunteer-led organizations that aim to support community members in their efforts to age in place through creating events and activities as well as coordinating volunteer neighbor-helping-neighbor models.

We thank you for your consideration of SB 223 which will establish the Social Connections Program which will help to reduce loneliness and isolation and enrich the lives of older Marylanders in the years to come.