



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 HB 158 – Department of Aging – Social Connections Program - Establishment Health and Government Operations Committee January 23, 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, HB 158 proposes to embrace technology to enhance important human service programs without additional cost.

HB 158 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 HB 158 which will establish the Social Connections Program which help to reduce loneliness and isolation and enrich the lives of older Marylanders in the years to come.