



**Testimony HOUSE BILL 158**  
**Health Government and Operations Committee**  
**January 23, 2025**  
**Position: FAVORABLE**

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk and Members of the Health & Government Operations Committee:

The Community Development Network of Maryland (CDN) is the voice for Maryland's community development sector and serves nearly 200 member organizations. CDN—focuses on small affordable housing developers, housing counseling agencies and community-based non- profits across the state of Maryland. The mission of CDN is to promote, strengthen and advocate for the community development sector throughout Maryland's urban, suburban and rural communities.

SB 212 aims to modernize and improve access to aging services statewide. This legislation focuses on restructuring and enhancing the Department of Aging's responsibilities and services for older adults. Key provisions include: Eliminating requirements for the Secretary of Aging to develop certain congregate housing and assisted living programs. Disbanding the Interagency Committee on Aging Services and shifts its responsibilities to the Department of Aging. Authorizes the Department to implement, coordinate, and supervise services for older adults, working in collaboration with local interagency committees. Mandating a streamlined, centralized entry system for accessing aging services within each planning and service area. Allowing area agencies on aging to collaborate with other entities and provide staff at these single points of entry for service delivery.: Requires the Department, in partnership with area agencies or others, to develop and manage a system that delivers essential services to older adults.

CDN and our partners across the state are excited about efforts to connect across agencies to use all available resources to assist older adults to age in place and safe, stable and affordable homes. We think that this legislation will be especially important in low income and communities of color where government services are lacking and often full of barriers.

Many people want the same things as they get older: to stay in their own homes, to maintain independence for as long as possible, and to turn to family and friends for help when needed. Community development organizations are critical to help older adults age in place. Collaborative government partnerships are key to this work

We urge your favorable report for SB 212.

Submitted by Claudia Wilson Randall, Executive Director, Community Development Network