



House Environment and Transportation Committee
February 17, 2026

HB 648 - Office of Home Energy Programs - Uniform Redetermination Process - Age

****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 HB 648 - Office of Home Energy Programs – Uniform Redetermination Process – Age.

As social workers who serve older adults, we understand the enormous impact of rising home energy prices on our clients. Many of them rely heavily on Maryland’s Energy Assistance programs, but some have struggled to apply and complete redetermination documents.

In 2022, the burden on older program participants was reduced by the enactment of SB 719 Human Services – Office of Home Energy Programs – Power to the People Pilot Program Personnel and Uniform Redetermination Process. That law simplified the redetermination process for energy assistance for people 65 years and older and those with permanent disabilities. The law allowed those seniors to complete the entire application for energy assistance only once, or, at most, every three years, instead of annually. Periodically, they receive postcards asking them to verify that there was no change in their income or household size. The law also allows them 45 days to respond to requests for additional documentation instead of the 15 day timeframe in place for younger applicants.

HB 648 would change the age range for this simplified redetermination process from 65 to 60. This would be a tremendous help to lower-income people in this age range, who often face the same barriers as older seniors – difficulty completing forms, and challenges with submitting documentation.

Now more than ever, we need to do everything possible to help older adults with their energy bills. For that reason, we urge a positive report on HB 648.

Respectfully,

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