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Aging-in-Place Programs – Grants – Multigenerational Third Places (Village Multigenerational Third Places Act)

Position: Favorable

March 11, 2026

Madam Chair, Mr. Vice Chair and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

I write today on behalf of CHAI to urge a **favorable** report on SB530, the Village Multigenerational Third Places Act. CHAI is a community-based nonprofit agency located in northwest Baltimore City and County. Over four decades of service, we have developed over 1,700 units of affordable housing primarily serving adults 62+. We also provide community-based housing services and programs that promote social connection and engagement among our older neighbors. CHAI is an active member of both the Maryland Affordable Housing Coalition, which advocates for resources for affordable housing rental development, and LeadingAge Maryland, which unites nonprofit providers of aging services, including affordable housing communities and providers of housing with services.

CHAI's service area of northwest Baltimore has a large concentration of older adults. While the 2024 AARP Home and Community Preferences Survey revealed that 75% of adults age 50 and older wish to remain in their homes as they age, we know that living alone increases the risk of isolation compounded by natural transitions that occur in older adulthood such as retirement, reduced mobility, and loss or relocation of loved ones. Research shows that maintaining and building social connections is crucial for healthy aging. Engaging in social activities provides companionship, promotes an active lifestyle, and offers a sense of purpose— all of which contributes to overall wellbeing and protects older adults against serious health risks such as heart disease, stroke, anxiety, depression, and dementia.

In light of our understanding the benefits of social connection among older adults, CHAI launched Northwest Neighbors Connecting (NNC) in 2013. Since then, NNC has operated as a "village"—a member-driven, grassroots network that coordinates volunteer help, social engagement, and connection to services so older residents can remain in their homes with the support of a strong community that helps them navigate various needs as they age. This is a cost-effective way to help older adults maintain independence, living with meaning and purpose in the homes and communities they love. NNC offers a wide variety of activities members can participate in based on their interests that range from fitness and health to arts, crafts, and culture. Regular groups and classes include Yoga, Cardio Drumming, Happy Aging, Happiness Group, Art Class, Calligraphy, Needlers, Book Club, and Diversity Dialogue.



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CHAI is an agency of The Associated



NNC is fortunate to be a part of CHAI, which also operates the Myerberg Center, a vibrant community hub for adults 55+ that promotes wellness, lifelong learning and connection. Many NNC activities take place at the Myerberg, which offers not only space conducive to gatherings, but also partnership in co-creating new programs that blend the content and expertise of the Myerberg Center with the creativity and life experience of the NNC members. This collaboration is a perfect example of the vision advanced by the bill, where connected groups of older adults gather in third places to support one another in healthy aging in the community.

Maryland's population is aging rapidly, and the state must develop smart strategies to support older Marylanders in achieving a longer span of healthy years. Community-based social networks that enable older Marylanders to support one another is one such smart strategy that also aligns with the desires of our older neighbors to remain in their homes and an active participant in their neighborhoods and surrounding communities. The Village Multigenerational Third Places Act would support this vision, and CHAI urges a **favorable** report.

Respectfully submitted:
Lisa K. Budlow
Chief Executive Officer

