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**TO:** House Health Committee  
**FROM:** LeadingAge Maryland  
**SUBJECT:** House Bill 278, Human Services - Department of Aging and Commission on Aging (The Longevity Ready Maryland Act)  
**DATE:** February 5, 2026  
**POSITION:** Favorable

LeadingAge Maryland supports House Bill 278, Human Services - Department of Aging and Commission on Aging (The Longevity Ready Maryland Act).

LeadingAge Maryland is a community of more than 150 not-for-profit aging services organizations serving residents and clients through continuing care retirement communities, affordable senior housing, assisted living, nursing homes and home and community-based services. Members of LeadingAge Maryland provide health care, housing, and services to more than 20,000 older persons each year. Our mission is to be the trusted voice for aging in Maryland, and our vision is that Maryland is a state where older adults have access to the services they need, when they need them, in the place they call home.

House Bill 278 establishes a comprehensive framework to prepare Maryland for its growing older adult population by requiring the Secretary of Aging to lead implementation of the Longevity Ready Maryland Plan, a statewide, multisector strategy focused on economic opportunity, financial security, health, wellness, mobility, and coordinated aging services. The bill strengthens the Department of Aging's role in assessing needs, aligning and evaluating programs, and advocating for systemic policy change, while creating a 13-member Commission on Aging to advise on implementation and legislative priorities; the measure takes effect October 1, 2026, with the goal of modernizing Maryland's aging services system and improving quality of life for older residents.

Maryland is facing significant demographic change: as of 2025, more than 1.4 million residents are age 60 and older, and by 2030 one in four Marylanders will be 60 or older. This shift creates both opportunities and challenges in housing, health, economic security, caregiving, and community engagement, and it demands coordinated, long-term action.

House Bill 278 builds on this data-driven 10-year roadmap to ensure older adults age with dignity, purpose, independence, and financial stability by mandating leadership from the

Secretary of Aging to coordinate cross-agency efforts and advocate for policy reform<sup>1</sup>. The bill promotes integration of services, streamlines access to supports, and prioritizes affordable, accessible housing and home- and community-based care that helps older Marylanders remain in their communities as they age. It also establishes a diverse, expert Commission on Aging to advise on implementation and outcomes, ensuring stakeholder voices guide progress.

Codifying this plan signals Maryland's commitment to ensuring older residents are valued participants in our economy and communities. House Bill 278 aligns with LeadingAge Maryland's mission to support policies that enhance aging services, strengthen care systems, and expand opportunities for older adults to age in place with dignity and choice. We urge a favorable report on House Bill 278 to help all Marylanders thrive across the lifespan.

For these reasons, LeadingAge Maryland respectfully requests a favorable report for House Bill 278.

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<sup>1</sup> HB 278 builds on the existing data-driven 10-year roadmap outlined in Governor Moore's Executive Order, which created the Longevity Ready Maryland Initiative in 2024.