



# *Maryland Senior Citizens Action Network*

## **MSCAN**

*AARP Maryland*

*Baltimore Jewish  
Council*

*Catholic Charities of  
Baltimore*

*Central Maryland  
Ecumenical Council*

*Church of the Brethren*

*Episcopal Diocese of  
Maryland*

*Housing Opportunities  
Commission of  
Montgomery County*

*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*

*National Association of  
Social Workers,  
Maryland Chapter*

*Presbytery of Baltimore*

*The Coordinating  
Center*

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The Maryland Senior Citizens Action Network (MSCAN) is a statewide coalition of advocacy groups, service providers, faith-based and mission-driven organizations that support policies that meet the housing, health, and quality of care needs of Maryland's low and moderate-income seniors.

**MSCAN supports HB 634.** HB 634 requires the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission to incorporate training on interacting with individuals with dementia and autism into both entrance-level and in-service police instruction. This includes education on best practices for locating and responding to individuals who wander, elope, or are otherwise missing, ensuring that officers are prepared to respond safely and effectively in these situations.

As Maryland's population ages, more older adults are living with dementia, cognitive impairment, or related conditions that can affect communication, behavior, and responses during stressful or unfamiliar encounters. Wandering is a common and serious safety concern for these individuals, and untrained responses can unintentionally escalate situations or delay reunification. Providing officers with the tools to recognize signs of cognitive impairment and to respond with appropriate communication and de-escalation strategies enhances safety for both residents and first responders.

HB 634 will help prevent avoidable tragedies, reduce unnecessary criminal justice involvement, and create safer, more informed interactions between law enforcement and the communities they serve. Integrating dementia-informed and autism-informed approaches into statewide training standards strengthens Maryland's commitment to public safety while supporting older adults, caregivers, and individuals with developmental disabilities.

For these reasons, MSCAN urges a favorable report for HB 634.