



Bill: HB 216 - Criminal Law - Benefits Exploitation

Committee: Judiciary

Position: Favorable

Date: January 27, 2026

On behalf of the 127,200 Marylanders living with Alzheimer's disease and the many other Marylanders living with another type of dementia, the Alzheimer's Association supports *HB 216 - Criminal Law - Benefits Exploitation*. This bill is aimed at stopping a person from knowingly exploiting and benefiting from another individual's government benefits. We urge a favorable report.

People living with dementia are particularly vulnerable to financial abuse and exploitation. As their memory and other thinking skills decline, people with dementia may not remember or report the abuse – or understand that someone is taking advantage of them. This abuse can occur anywhere – including at home or in care settings.

Many Marylanders living with dementia are likely receiving some of the government benefits represented in HB 216, specifically Medicare and/or Medicaid. In Maryland alone, the Medicaid cost of caring for people with Alzheimer's in 2025 was an estimated \$1.7 billion. It is important that government benefits are supporting the individuals who are using these services, not bad actors who are hoping to benefit by taking advantage of an individual.

This bill will provide further safeguards to protect Maryland's most vulnerable. The Alzheimer's Association urges a favorable report on HB 216. Please contact Megan Peters, Director of Government Affairs at mrpeters@alz.org with any questions.