

HOUSE BILL 278

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(PRE-FILED)

6lr0226
CF SB 113

By: **Chair, Health Committee (By Request – Departmental – Aging)**

Requested: September 24, 2025

Introduced and read first time: January 14, 2026

Assigned to: Health

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Human Services – Department of Aging and Commission on Aging**
3 **(The Longevity Ready Maryland Act)**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring the Secretary of Aging to lead implementation of the
5 Longevity Ready Maryland Plan; repealing, adding, and altering certain duties of
6 the Secretary to enable the implementation, reporting, and evolution of the
7 Longevity Ready Maryland Plan; altering the membership and duties of the
8 Commission on Aging; requiring the Department of Aging to staff the Commission;
9 and generally relating to the Longevity Ready Maryland Plan, the Department of
10 Aging, and the Commission on Aging.

11 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
12 Article – Human Services
13 Section 10–101
14 Annotated Code of Maryland
15 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)
16 (As enacted by Chapters 33 and 34 of 2025)

17 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
18 Article – Human Services
19 Section 10–204, 10–206, and 10–208
20 Annotated Code of Maryland
21 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

22 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
23 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

24 **Article – Human Services**

25 10–101.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



(a) In this title the following words have the meanings indicated.

(b) “Area agency on aging” means the local agency that the Department designates in accordance with the Older Americans Act of 1965 to administer the delivery of a comprehensive and coordinated [plan] **SYSTEM** of social and other services and activities for older adults in a planning and service area.

(c) “Community for a Lifetime” means a community certified under § 10–804 of this title.

(d) “Department” means the Department of Aging.

(E) “LONGEVITY READY MARYLAND PLAN” MEANS A MULTISECTOR PLAN ON AGING THAT:

(1) TRANSFORMS PROGRAMS, SERVICES, POLICIES, INSTITUTIONS, AND SYSTEMS TO ADDRESS THE GROWING POPULATION OF OLDER ADULTS; AND

(2) INCORPORATES STREAMLINED, INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO AGING SERVICES.

[(e)] (F) “Planning and service area” means an area of the State that the Department designates in accordance with the Older Americans Act of 1965 for the planning and administration of social, health, and other services for older adults.

[(f)] (G) “Secretary” means the Secretary of Aging.
10–204.

(a) The Secretary shall administer the programs and activities that the federal government delegates to the State under the Older Americans Act of 1965 that are not otherwise committed by law to another unit of State government.

(b) The Secretary:

(1) is a member of the Governor’s Executive Council; and

(2) shall cooperate with and receive the cooperation of State, federal, and local governmental units to carry out the purposes of this title.

(c) The Secretary shall **LEAD IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LONGEVITY READY MARYLAND PLAN, WITH THE FOLLOWING GOALS:**

(1) BUILDING A LONGEVITY ECOSYSTEM;

1 **(2) PROMOTING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY;**

2 **(3) PREPARING STATE RESIDENTS TO AFFORD LONGEVITY; AND**

3 **(4) OPTIMIZING HEALTH, WELLNESS, AND MOBILITY.**

4 **(D) TO IMPLEMENT THE LONGEVITY READY MARYLAND PLAN, THE**
5 **SECRETARY SHALL:**

6 (1) evaluate the service needs of [seniors] **OLDER ADULTS** in the State;

7 (2) determine the extent to which existing public and private programs
8 [meet the needs of seniors], **POLICIES, INSTITUTIONS, AND SYSTEMS SUPPORT OLDER**
9 **ADULTS;**

10 (3) establish priorities for meeting the needs of [seniors] **OLDER ADULTS;**
11 **AND**

12 (4) coordinate, subject to existing law, assess and evaluate, and educate the
13 public and professionals about all State and local programs and services, both public and
14 private, that relate and are important to the well-being of [seniors] **OLDER ADULTS** in the
15 State[, including programs and services in the areas of:

16 (i) income maintenance;

17 (ii) public health;

18 (iii) mental health;

19 (iv) housing and urban development;

20 (v) employment;

21 (vi) education;

22 (vii) recreation; and

23 (viii) rehabilitation of seniors with physical or mental disabilities; and

24 (5) develop a statewide plan incorporating local plans for a comprehensive
25 and coordinated system of health, social, and community services for seniors, including
26 housing, and institutional and noninstitutional care].

27 **[(d)] (E) The Secretary shall:**

(1) represent the interests of [seniors] **OLDER ADULTS** by serving as an advocate **FOR POLICY, SYSTEMS, AND INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE** at all levels of government **AND WITHIN THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN SUPPORT OF THE LONGEVITY READY MARYLAND PLAN**;

(2) [consult with and advise the secretaries of the principal departments of State government] **EMPHASIZE CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION, INCLUDING CONSULTING AND ADVISING UNITS OF STATE GOVERNMENT AND STATE BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS** about [the programs and services for seniors that are the primary responsibility of those departments] **ANY ACTION THE UNIT, BOARD, OR COMMISSION MAY TAKE TO ASSIST IN IMPLEMENTING THE LONGEVITY READY MARYLAND PLAN**;

(3) consult with the Commission on Aging on [all matters pertaining to programs for seniors] **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LONGEVITY READY MARYLAND PLAN**;

(4) provide consultation and technical assistance to [communities and civic groups] **ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHER ENTITIES OR PERSONS** developing local services for [seniors] **OLDER ADULTS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH AREA AGENCIES ON AGING AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AND ENTITIES FUNDED BY THE DEPARTMENT**;

(5) maintain a [clearinghouse of information] **SYSTEM THAT PROVIDES INFORMATION, REFERRALS, AND COUNSELING FOR OLDER ADULTS AND THEIR CAREGIVERS** related to the interests of [seniors] **OLDER ADULTS AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LONGEVITY READY MARYLAND PLAN**; and

(6) review and recommend [policies] **LEGISLATION AND OTHER POLICY ACTION** to the Governor on publicly funded plans [and], programs, **INSTITUTIONS, AND SYSTEMS** that affect [seniors] **OLDER ADULTS AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LONGEVITY READY MARYLAND PLAN**.

[(e)] (F) The Secretary may adopt regulations to carry out the provisions of law that are within the jurisdiction of the Secretary.

10–206.

(a) On or before January 1 each year, the Secretary shall report to the Governor and, subject to § 2–1257 of the State Government Article, to the General Assembly **ON**:

(1) **THE ALLOCATION OF FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE FOR SENIOR CITIZEN ACTIVITIES CENTERS DISTRIBUTED BY THE DEPARTMENT; AND**

(2) **A SUMMARY OF KEY ACTIVITIES FUNDED AT SENIOR CITIZEN ACTIVITIES CENTERS.**

1 [(b) The report required under subsection (a) of this section that shall include:

2 (1) with the advice and recommendation of the Commission on Aging:

3 (i) a description of the senior citizen activities centers in each
4 county;

5 (ii) the allocation and use of funds made available for senior citizen
6 activities centers;

7 (iii) the results of any studies; and

8 (iv) any recommendations for legislation; and

9 (2) information regarding the operation and performance of accessible
10 housing services counseling provided by the Aging and Disability Resource Center
11 Program.]

12 **(B) (1) ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 1 EACH YEAR, THE SECRETARY SHALL**
13 **REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR AND, SUBJECT TO § 2-1257 OF THE STATE**
14 **GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.**

15 **(2) THE REPORT REQUIRED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS**
16 **SUBSECTION SHALL INCLUDE A SUMMARY OF:**

17 **(I) THE PROGRESS MADE DURING THE IMMEDIATELY**
18 **PRECEDING YEAR TO IMPLEMENT THE MOST RECENTLY PUBLISHED**
19 **COMPREHENSIVE LONGEVITY READY MARYLAND PLAN;**

20 **(II) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LEGISLATION, POLICY CHANGE,**
21 **OR OTHER RELATED PLANNING OR ADVOCACY EFFORTS MADE BY THE COMMISSION**
22 **ON AGING TO THE DEPARTMENT;**

23 **(III) ANY STUDY, SURVEY, OR OTHER FORM OF RESEARCH**
24 **CONDUCTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OR THE COMMISSION ON AGING; AND**

25 **(IV) ANY AVAILABLE RESEARCH AND BEST PRACTICES**
26 **REVIEWED BY THE COMMISSION ON AGING.**

27 **(C) ON OR BEFORE JULY 1, 2029, AND EVERY 4 YEARS ON JULY 1**
28 **THEREAFTER, THE SECRETARY SHALL PROVIDE TO THE GOVERNOR AND, SUBJECT**
29 **TO § 2-1257 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**
30 **AN UPDATED COMPREHENSIVE LONGEVITY READY MARYLAND PLAN THAT:**

(1) COMPLIES WITH § 10–204 OF THIS SUBTITLE;

(2) INCLUDES PROGRESS MADE ON EXISTING GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES IDENTIFIED IN THE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING LONGEVITY READY MARYLAND PLAN;

(3) MAINTAINS EXISTING GOALS AND INCLUDES ANY ADDITIONAL GOALS; AND

(4) UPDATES OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES IF APPROPRIATE BASED ON EVOLVING CIRCUMSTANCES AND POPULATION PROJECTIONS.

10–208.

(a) There is a Commission on Aging in the Department.

(b) (1) The Commission consists of [13] THE FOLLOWING members [appointed by the Governor as follows]:

(i) [1 shall be a] ONE member of the Senate of Maryland, [who may not vote] APPOINTED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE;

(ii) [1 shall be a] ONE member of the [Maryland] House of Delegates, [who may not vote] APPOINTED BY THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE; [and]

(iii) [11 shall be selected to reflect the geographic diversity of the State and because of their interest in the needs of seniors] THE SECRETARY OF AGING, OR THE SECRETARY'S DESIGNEE; AND

(IV) THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS, APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR:

1. ONE DIRECTOR OF AN AREA AGENCY ON AGING, SERVING AS THE PRESIDENT OF THE MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF AREA AGENCIES ON AGING;

2. THREE REPRESENTATIVES OF ORGANIZATIONS LOCATED IN THE STATE THAT ADVOCATE FOR OLDER ADULTS AND CAREGIVERS;

3. FIVE EXPERTS ON AGING REPRESENTING THE DISCIPLINES OF HEALTH CARE, TECHNOLOGY, ACADEMIA, INNOVATION, AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND PHILANTHROPY; AND

1 **4. FIVE INDIVIDUALS WITH A DEMONSTRATED INTEREST**
2 **IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LONGEVITY READY MARYLAND PLAN.**

3 (2) [At least 7 members shall be at least 55 years old] **TO THE EXTENT**
4 **PRACTICABLE, COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP SHALL REFLECT THE AGE, RACE,**
5 **ETHNICITY, DISABILITY, GENDER IDENTITY, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, IMMIGRANT**
6 **HERITAGE, LIVED AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE, AND REGIONAL GEOGRAPHIC**
7 **REPRESENTATION DIVERSITY OF THE STATE.**

8 **(C) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL PROVIDE STAFF FOR THE COMMISSION.**

9 **[(c)] (D)** (1) The term of a member of the Commission is 4 years.

10 (2) The terms of **NEW** members appointed under subsection **[(b)(1)(iii)]**
11 **(B)(1)(IV)** of this section are staggered as required by the terms provided for members of
12 the Commission on October 1, **[2007] 2026.**

13 (3) A member of the Commission appointed under subsection **[(b)(1)(iii)]**
14 **(B)(1)(IV)** of this section may not serve more than two consecutive terms.

15 (4) At the end of a term, a member continues to serve until a successor is
16 appointed and qualifies.

17 (5) A member who is appointed after a term has begun serves only for the
18 rest of the term and until a successor is appointed and qualifies.

19 **(6) A MEMBER WHO FAILS TO ATTEND AT LEAST 50% OF THE**
20 **MEETINGS DURING ANY CONSECUTIVE 12-MONTH PERIOD SHALL BE CONSIDERED**
21 **TO HAVE RESIGNED.**

22 **(E) THE COMMISSION SHALL DETERMINE THE FREQUENCY, DATES, TIMES,**
23 **AND PLACES OF ITS MEETINGS.**

24 **[(d)] (F)** (1) From among the members of the Commission, the **[Governor]**
25 **SECRETARY:**

26 **(I)** shall designate **[a] THE chair OF THE COMMISSION; AND**

27 **(II)** **MAY DESIGNATE A VICE CHAIR OF THE COMMISSION.**

28 (2) **A MAJORITY OF THE MEMBERS THEN SERVING ON THE**
29 **COMMISSION IS A QUORUM.**

(3) THE CHAIR MAY ESTABLISH SUBCOMMITTEES OF THE COMMISSION.

(4) THE COMMISSION MAY CONSULT AND COLLABORATE WITH LOCAL COMMISSIONS ON AGING.

[(e)] (G) A member of the Commission:

(1) may not receive compensation as a member of the Commission; but

(2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State Travel Regulations as provided in the State budget.

[(f)] (H) The Commission shall:

(1) exercise the powers and perform the duties specified in this title;

(2) [review:

(i) ongoing statewide programs and activities for seniors; and

(ii) new statewide programs for seniors before the programs are implemented; and

(3) make recommendations to the Secretary about statewide programs and activities for seniors] **REVIEW AND ADVISE THE DEPARTMENT ON THE LONGEVITY READY MARYLAND PLAN AND OVERALL PROGRESS OF THE DEPARTMENT AND MULTISECTOR PARTNERS IN IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MOST RECENTLY PUBLISHED LONGEVITY READY MARYLAND PLAN;**

(3) ADVISE THE SECRETARY ON LEGISLATIVE, POLICY, AND OTHER SYSTEMS CHANGES THAT COULD ASSIST WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LONGEVITY READY MARYLAND PLAN; AND

(4) ADVISE THE SECRETARY ON ANY UPDATE TO THE LONGEVITY READY MARYLAND PLAN REQUIRED BY § 10-206 OF THIS SUBTITLE, INCLUDING ANY UPDATE TO THE GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES TO BE INCLUDED IN SUBSEQUENT LONGEVITY READY MARYLAND PLANS.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

(a) The terms of the members of the Commission on Aging serving on October 1, 2026, shall continue until the expiration of the member's term.

1 (b) The terms of the members of the Commission on Aging appointed in
2 accordance with § 10–208(b)(1)(iv) of the Human Services Article, as enacted by Section 1
3 of this Act, shall expire as follows:

4 (1) four in 2028;

5 (2) five in 2029; and

6 (3) five in 2030.

7 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
8 October 1, 2026.