



# THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

## OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

**BILL:** Senate Bill 407 – Office of the Attorney General - Senior and Vulnerable Adult Asset Recovery Unit

**SPONSOR:** Senators Kramer, *et al.*

**HEARING DATE:** February 12, 2020

**COMMITTEE:** Judicial Proceedings

**CONTACT:** Intergovernmental Affairs Office, 301-780-8411

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**POSITION:** SUPPORT

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The Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 407**, which establishes the Senior and Vulnerable Adult Asset Recovery Unit in the Office of the Attorney General to bring civil action against those who financially exploit vulnerable adults and recover damages for property lost or damage.

This bill will have a positive impact on the Adult Protective Services (APS) Program coordinated through the Child, Adult, and Family Services Division within the Prince George's County Department of Social Services. APS investigates allegations of abuse (sexual and physical), neglect (by self or by others), and exploitation (sexual and financial) of vulnerable adults. In cases of financial exploitation, it is difficult to recoup assets stolen from the client. Referrals are made to the Financial Crimes Unit of the local law enforcement, but seldom are the perpetrators prosecuted. Between the years 2017 to 2019, 814 allegations of financial exploitation were investigated, of which 172 were dispositioned as exploitation "Indicated." However, less than 2% were convicted, and it is unknown if any of the victims were able to recover damages. Often, the victim will refuse to provide testimony or information to prosecute because the perpetrator is a relative, and they don't want them to go to jail.

Financial loss can impact a vulnerable adult's ability to remain safe in the community. Financial exploitation of one's resources can result in evictions and foreclosures, thus increasing the homeless population in the county. According to the National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA), financial exploitation can also cause Financial Destitution, Depression, Feelings of Fear, Shame, Anger, and Reliance on Government "Safety Net" Programs.

For the reasons stated above, the Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 407** and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report.