



Maryland Senior Citizens Action Network

MSCAN

AARP Maryland

*Alzheimer's
Association,
Maryland Chapters*

*Baltimore Jewish
Council*

Catholic Charities

*Central Maryland
Ecumenical Council*

Church of the Brethren

*Episcopal Diocese of
Maryland*

*Housing Opportunities
Commission of
Montgomery County*

*Jewish Community
Relations Council of
Greater Washington*

*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*

*MSCAN Co-Chairs:
Carol Lienhard
Kimberly Burton
443-901-1550 x 210*

Testimony in Support of SB 481 – Criminal Law – Crimes of Violence – Vulnerable Adults

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

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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 supports policies that meet the housing and care needs of Maryland's low and moderate-income seniors. We appreciate the opportunity to offer support for SB 481 – Criminal Law – Crimes of Violence – Vulnerable Adults.

Section 5-101 of the Public Safety Article and §14-101 of the Criminal Law Article have independent definitions of a “crime of violence.” Designation of an offense under one of these definitions may subject a person to varying consequences. SB 481 adds “Abuse or neglect of a vulnerable adult in the first degree” to the classification of “crime of violence.”

In Maryland, and across the nation, crimes against vulnerable adults are on the rise. Older adults in particular are suffering higher rates of abuse and neglect. Sadly these crimes are most often committed by family members or trusted friends. Not only does the crime impact the dignity of an older adult, studies have found victims to experience higher rates of somatic disturbance and mortality.

MSCAN respectfully requests a favorable report on SB 481, elevating the consequences for an individual who commits abuse or neglect of a vulnerable adult in the first degree. Thank you for the opportunity to offer our support.