



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 745

Office of the Attorney General-Senior and Vulnerable Adult Asset Recovery
Unit

*Judiciary
Appropriations*

March 5, 2020

Submitted by Stacey Jefferson and Margo Quinlan, Co-Chairs

Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) supports the creation and funding of a unit within Maryland's Office of the Attorney General to protect vulnerable adults from financial abuse.

Even financially stable older adults are at risk of experiencing poverty due to rampant financial abuse. Low social supports, living in crowded communities, dementia, trauma, and physical impairments are just some factors which make older adults particularly vulnerable to abuse. According to the National Center on Elder Abuse, financial abuse of elders impacts the financial, physical and emotional health of seniors. The U.S. Department of Justice estimates that the field of elder abuse lags at least two decades behind the fields of child abuse and domestic violence, and calls on policymakers to enact laws to adequately address the issues. Maryland has the opportunity to become a leader in addressing financial abuse of older adults.

House Bill 745 provides greater recourse for older adults who fall victim to financial abuse. The bill would create a dedicated unit within the office of the Attorney General, specifically dedicated to elder financial abuse. The bill also requires a \$250,000 annual appropriation to support the unit.

This bill provides Maryland the opportunity to protect some of its most vulnerable residents from financial abuse, and serves as a deterrent against future acts. **MAP appreciates your consideration, and urges a favorable report on House Bill 745.**

Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) is a coalition of service providers, faith communities, and advocacy organizations advancing statewide public policies and programs necessary to alleviate the burdens faced by Marylanders living in or near poverty, and to address the underlying systemic causes of poverty.

Member Agencies:

Advocates for Children and Youth
Baltimore Jewish Council
Behavioral Health System Baltimore
CASH Campaign of Maryland
Catholic Charities
Episcopal Diocese of Maryland
Family League of Baltimore
Fuel Fund of Maryland
Health Care for the Homeless
Homeless Persons
Representation Project
Job Opportunities Task Force
League of Women Voters of Maryland
Loyola University Maryland
Maryland Catholic Conference
Maryland Center on Economic Policy
Maryland Community Action
Partnership
Maryland Family Network
Maryland Hunger Solutions
Paul's Place
Public Justice Center
St. Vincent de Paul of Baltimore
Welfare Advocates

Marylanders Against Poverty

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