



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*

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Testimony in Support of SB 275, "Maryland Department of Health – Residential Service Agencies – Training Requirements"

Maryland Senate Finance Committee February 4, 2021

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.

This memo notes our strong support for SB 275, legislation which requires each residential service agency to provide three hours of initial training and two hours of annual continuing education training, to its administrators and direct care staff on topics related to Alzheimer's disease and related dementia. The 2021 bill, a significant revision of past legislation that has been introduced, provides flexibility for providers; it pushes the mandated start date for the training to July 1, 2022, it significantly reduces the number of training hours, it focuses the scope of the training, and it allows supervisors to provide the training to their staff.

This legislation helps low- and moderate-income seniors. According to Alzheimer's Association statistics, 95 percent of the 110,000 Marylanders with Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia are seniors. These seniors, almost always, have at least one other chronic condition; as their diseases progress, individuals are unable to complete activities of daily living (such as eating, dressing, and bathing) without assistance. The care of these individuals is complicated, and appropriate training for the staff serving this population is essential.

A significant number of home care providers this bill impacts accept Medicaid for the care they offer. This legislation puts a foundation in place so that these vulnerable Marylanders with dementia receive better treatment, from a more well-trained staff; it also includes annual continuing education, so that staff can have the latest information on best practices.

We urge a favorable report on this legislation.