

SHANEKA HENSON
Legislative District 30A
Anne Arundel County

Appropriations Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

January, 29, 2021

Chairwoman Shane E. Pendergrass
Vice Chair Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk
Room 241
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Good afternoon,

Distinguished members of the Health and Government Operations Committee. For the record, I am Shaneka Henson, District 30A Delegate. Chairwoman Pendergrass and Vice Chairwoman Pena-Melnyk, thank you for the opportunity to present to the committee HB276 “Congregate Care Facilities - Visitation”. I ask that the committee report favorably on this legislation.

The goal of this bill is to bring families together when they need it most using alternative access. Currently, MD visitation law does not cover residents living in nursing homes and home health facilities. Although COVID-19 does not allow for conventional visitations, quarantining should not be equivocal to full social isolation. Disconnect from loved ones can result in physical and mental decline; total isolation can cause depression, anxiety, and cause stress on pre-existing physical conditions. This is not what we want for our parents, grandparents, and loved ones when our only intention is to care for them.

HB 276 prevents this from happening by bridging the gap between families using technology. Under this legislation, congregate care facilities would be required to provide and assist with the communication between patients and family members via video call or telephone access. The cost is minimal, the rewards are extensive. This bill is for the health and happiness of Maryland residents.

Thank you all for your gracious consideration of HB 276, and I humbly ask that you vote favorably.

Thank you,
Delegate Shaneka T. Henson

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SHANEKA'.