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 Senate Bill 838 – Transportation – Elderly and Handicapped Transportation Service – County Funding
House Appropriations Committee
Thursday, March 10, 2022

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, health and quality of care needs of Maryland's low and moderate-income seniors.

MSCAN is pleased to support SB 838 since it would provide stable funding and annual increases for the State Special Transportation Assistance Program on which many low and moderate-income seniors rely. We are aware that thousands of Maryland's seniors depend on SSTAP for rides to physical therapy and medical appointments. Of these medical appointments, transportation to dialysis is one of the most critical. On a regular basis, hundreds of seniors travel to dialysis appointments every day. Without this critical transportation, it is certain that many of them would end up in expensive nursing homes at a far greater cost to the state than the cost of SSTAP funding.

The SSTAP program is extremely cost-effect and desperately needs additional funding which could actually save the state millions of dollars. For example, the current **cost of nursing home care in Maryland is $106,850.** We know that hundreds of elderly dialysis patients use the service every day. If just **150** of those patients were unable to receive SSTAP transportation and ended up in nursing homes, the cost to taxpayers would be **over $16 million dollars <u>every year</u>!** Thus, it is dramatically cost-effective to increase funding for SSTAP to prevent tragic, outrageously expensive, nursing home placements throughout the state.

MSCAN appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of SB 838. Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation. We will be grateful for a favorable report.