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Written Testimony

Senate Bill 624- Assisted Living Referrer – Requirements and Prohibitions

Finance Committee - February 24, 2022

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SUPPORT

Background: Senate Bill 624, (SB624), expands upon legislation from 2020 which, in part, created transparency around the practices of assisted living referral agencies for the benefit of the consumer. SB624 would require referrers to maintain liability insurance, obtain criminal history checks of their employees, and sign a Federal Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act agreement with their clients. Additionally, referrers would be required to provide and maintain documents written and signed between them and their clients, including the right for the client to terminate the service at will, and a requirement that the referrer communicate any termination to all assisted living program the client has been referred.

Written Comments: Every senior deserves to live in a safe place, however, right now in Maryland, we know that is not the case. Several Associated agencies, including, Jewish Community Services (JCS), Comprehensive Housing Assistance Inc. (CHAI), and CHANA provide services to the rapidly aging Baltimore Community. When older adults who need assistance are looking for a safe place to live, especially those without close friends or relatives, they often use referral agencies. Many agencies use predatory practices, where the older adult does not know that they can leave the relationship if they do not feel that it is a good fit. They can feel stuck and continue using the services by a referral agency that may not be working in the best interest of the older adult. SB624 simply adds protections for Maryland's older adults.

For these reasons, we ask for a favorable report on SB624.

The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of The Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.

BALTIMORE JEWISH COUNCIL

5750 Park Heights Avenue, Suite 329 • Baltimore, Maryland 21215

410-542-4850 • fax 410-542-4834 • baltjc.org

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