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## Economic Matters

### HB1001 – SUPPORT

February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Eileen O'Connor-Liebman, Patient Advocate  
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To: Delegate Carey and esteemed members of the House Economic Matters Committee

RE: Testimony in Support of HB1001 – Office of Home Energy Programs – Uniform Redetermination Process

Dear Delegate Carey and esteemed members of the House Economic Matters Committee:

I am Eileen O'Connor-Liebman, Patient Advocate for Maryland Oncology Hematology in Columbia Maryland writing today in favor of HB1001.

The Critical Medical Needs Program (CMNP) started as a Pilot Program in our office in Spring of 2015. We were beyond excited and honored to be a part of the process when it was passed into law in Spring of 2019. This program is a successful partnership between state agencies, utility companies, trained navigators and non-profits.

**The Uniform Redetermination Process HB1001** would allow seniors who are OHEP eligible to apply for Home Energy Assistance Programs with all documentation one time. Thereafter, they would be verified yearly via mailing or other means. This would be a significant benefit for seniors as many of them really struggle with the application & the gathering of documents. It is also extremely difficult for them to get to a local OHEP office. The last several applications that I have helped process through the critical medical needs program were patients over 65 years of age. You can hear the frustration, embarrassment and overwhelmingness in their voice when helping them navigate the system. Many of our seniors are often being cared for by various family members at different times and that scenario makes it incredibly difficult to maneuver. **The Uniform Redetermination Process** will help the most vulnerable residents across the state apply for the energy assistance grants that are available for those who qualify and ease the burden of the daunting task to re-apply. Not to mention having to remember to reapply before they are in harm's way. HB1001 is a necessary and vital component that will help our most vulnerable, our seniors. We are in support and are asking for a favorable report on HB1001.

Sincerely,

  
Eileen O'Connor-Liebman, Patient Advocate