



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

P.O. Box 34047, Bethesda, MD 20827

www.womensdemocraticclub.org

**SB0527 – Elderly Individuals – Howard County and Montgomery County Adult Day Health Care Services Pilot Program and Task Force
Senate Finance Committee – February 22, 2022
SUPPORT**

Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony concerning an important priority of the **Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club (WDC)** for the 2022 legislative session. WDC is one of the largest and most active Democratic Clubs in our County with hundreds of politically active women and men, including many elected officials.

WDC urges the passage of SB0527. This bill provides much needed coordination of services to the vulnerable Medicaid recipients requiring adult day care services that have thus far been fragmented and uncoordinated. The bill creates a pilot program that would integrate needed services such as meals, medication administration, socialization, and related services into a single entity. This integrator will be the recipient's connection to the outside world allowing them to age in place and avoid future disruptions in service such as the shuttering of adult day care facilities in Maryland in March of 2020¹, representing yet another negative consequence of the COVID-19 Pandemic. This Howard County and Montgomery County Adult Day Health Care Services Pilot Program will coordinate adult home health and medical services through one or more integrator entities. It should be noted that 14.2% of Marylanders are enrolled in Medicaid and as our population is aging and living longer, the number of residents needing health and medical services will not only increase but will also rely on these services for an extended period of time.

The Maryland Department of Aging reports that the number of older Marylanders is increasing. Of the nearly 5.8 million people in Maryland in 2015, 18.35% were age 60 or over. This percentage is expected to increase to 25.4% of Maryland's projected population of 6.7 million by the year 2030. In fact, individuals between the ages of 80-84 are the fastest growing segment of the population. Furthermore, Montgomery County has the largest number of older residents (60+) in the State. According to the U.S. Census, women outlive men and in Maryland, women represent 57% of the 60+

¹ COVID-19 Temporary Closure of Adult Medical Day Care Centers Frequently Asked Questions, March 31, 2020, Maryland Department of Health. https://www.maads.org/sites/default/files/AMDC%20COVID-19%20Closure%20Freq%20Asked%20Questions_FINAL_03312020.pdf



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population and 63% of the 80+ population. Therefore, women are disproportionately impacted by the reduction in home health and medical care services.

As with other impacted groups, our vulnerable older residents would benefit from innovative solutions aimed at mitigating the detrimental effects of the pandemic, especially older women. Elder justice and racial justice are intertwined. Over 55% of Montgomery County residents are categorized as Black, Hispanic, and Asian. Therefore, potentially a large percentage of the vulnerable elderly in the county are also racially disadvantaged and will benefit from the proposed pilot program.

We ask for your support for SB0527 and strongly urge a favorable Committee report.

Respectfully,

Leslie Milano
President