

SB624 – Support

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SB624 – Favorable
Finance Committee
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Dear Chairman, Vice Chairman and Members of the Finance Committee

I am the owner of CarePatrol Baltimore and in support of SB 624. I have been helping seniors find assisted living and memory care for over 8 years. During this time, my team and I has placed over 1500 seniors in Baltimore and Harford County and Baltimore City. I have a Bachelor in Science of Nursing from Duke University for over 40 years, Master in General Administration - Health Care at the University of Maryland, Certified Senior Advisor and Certified in completing safety assessment in the home and teaching Dementia care. Our mission is to find safe communities for the seniors so that they can age in place.

I specifically want to support Senator Hettleman's efforts to require adherence to Hipaa law when sharing medical information. Why is this important now? The industry is growing both in the number of seniors that need this service and the number of companies helping seniors. The seniors and families are waiting longer to make this move into assisted living and their health care needs are increasing. This change has been happening over the past 4 and I have increased health needs for the seniors who have been isolated and not getting medical care during the past 2 years with covid.

A reputable referral advisor needs to fully understand the senior's healthcare in much more detail to refer those care options today but in the future also. Hospital and Nursing Home Social workers and care managers are now sharing with us information such as history and physician, physician therapy records, psychiatric history and medication lists through their electronic health records. We are then sharing that information with the assisted living and memory care communities to make the optimal recommendations and match their capabilities with the client's needs. Any other day of the week, it would seem preposterous for a hospital or nursing home to voluntarily give this information out to anyone outside the family without a HIPAA release.

Having the HIPAA release signed will guarantee that the information is protected according to established law. This would also guarantee that the referral advisor was either speaking with the senior themselves, their power of attorney, or a recognized responsible party. There will be full transparency on who is looking out for their best interest and it would stop the questionable practice of selling the senior's information to the highest 3rd party bidder such as hearing aid companies to hospital bed suppliers and a whole other host of unsolicited vendors.

I applaud and support Senator Hettleman's regulation which protects Maryland seniors by legally giving us the information we need to make a safe placement and to stop the selling of their private healthcare information.

I urge the Senate to pass SB624 to help protect our vulnerable seniors.