



CALVERT, CHARLES & ST. MARY'S COUNCILS ON AGING

March 1, 2022

Delegate Shane Pendergrass
Room 241
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Statement of Support: HB 1243 Rural Non-emergency Medical Transportation

Dear Delegate Pendergrass:

We are thrilled to learn that the Maryland House of Delegates will consider establishing a new rural non-emergency medical transportation program. Programs such as this will improve healthcare for our most vulnerable seniors and individuals with disabilities. We represent the three regional Commissions on Aging in Southern Maryland and we have learned about the benefits of providing non-emergency medical transportation for citizens living in isolated rural areas of the State through a regional program called Wheels to Wellness.

The percentage of Seniors is one of the fastest growing populations and is also one of the most vulnerable groups for transportation access. In addition, this population is highly vulnerable to health and mobility complications. In rural areas, they are further isolated from basic needs as well as specialized care found in more urban areas.

By providing temporary medical transportation, our seniors and individuals with disabilities will be able to stabilize their health treatments and will be able to reach specialized care facilities found in the urban areas. In Southern Maryland, the Wheels to Wellness program has been coordinating patients identified through local hospital care coordinators with specialized transportation providers. Recent CRISP reports of enrolled patients indicated significant cost savings by reduced readmissions and medical incidences.

On behalf of our commissions, we wholeheartedly support your efforts to establish this program and we believe there will be a positive impact on the overall health of our most vulnerable populations.

Sincerely,

Charles Harrell

Charles Harrell
Calvert County

Linda Stansbury

Linda Stanbury
Charles County

Carolyn Guy

Carolyn Guy
St Mary's County