



## AREA COUNCIL ON AGING

March 3, 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:

The Charles County Area Council on Aging is pleased to support HB 1243 to establish a Rural Non-emergency Medical Transportation Program in the State of Maryland. As an advocate for the welfare of our senior citizens, we believe this program is vital for our aging population who need routine medical care but may not have any available transportation to receive the care or are unable to reach needed specialized care in urban areas.

A similar program, Wheels to Wellness currently operates in Calvert and St Mary's counties as part of the local hospital case management program. This program is beginning operations at the Charles County Medical Center and has demonstrated the absolute necessity to coordinate transportation with healthcare. By anchoring the legislation with urban destinations, the proposed legislation helps patients obtain highly specialized care that is not offered in our region.

Medical transportation remains a major issue for our senior citizens. Although a high percentage of our seniors are unable to drive, they require more appointments and healthcare maintenance. Approximately one in five non-emergency appointments are missed because patients could not get to or from the appointment. In addition, many Charles County residents live outside the fixed route service areas for VanGo. This program will supplement the current VanGo services and help both our senior population and residents outside of a public transit fixed route to obtain the vital healthcare they need both in Charles County and across County lines.

We fully support the proposed legislation and look forward to its passage.

Sincerely,

*Linda Stansbury*

Linda Stansbury  
Chairperson