

## *Marylanders for Patient Rights*

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### **MARYLANDERS FOR PATIENT RIGHTS REQUESTS A FAVORABLE REPORT ON HB544**

Marylanders for Patient Rights is a leading advocacy group for patients in our state. We strongly believe that HB544 is vitally important to the health and well-being of patients and their caregivers, and we urge you to provide a favorable report.

The caregiver workforce continues to dwindle in number, leaving many vulnerable patients without the help they need. It is very difficult for patients to have a revolving group of caregivers while those workers, understandably, seek better employment situations. That is why it is critical to gather the necessary data to help us understand how to reduce turnover and attract more workers to the field. The reporting required by HB544 will allow the state to do an informed analysis of caregiver employment pay and benefits.

The data to be collected are basic and easy to provide by the Residential Service Agencies (RSAs): the personal care aide's hourly pay rate and employment classification; whether the personal care aide has health insurance and workman's compensation through the RSA; and whether the personal care aide has been provided with earned sick and safe leave under the Maryland Healthy Working Families Act.

The provision of these data by the RSA will only require a modest amount of time, yet it will yield vital information to the Maryland Department of Health for data-driven policy development. Confidentiality can be readily maintained by publication of aggregate (not individual) data on RSA's pay rates. HB544 will allow the Department of Health to do an annual report on reimbursement rates and issues related to maintaining the caregiver workforce.

Please provide a favorable report on HB544, and support Maryland caregivers.

Thank you,

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