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**HB 161 Criminal Law-Exploitation of Vulnerable Adult  
or Elderly Individual – Undue Influence  
FAVORABLE  
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
March 22, 2022**

Good afternoon Chairman Smith and Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee. I am Tammy Bresnahan. I am the Director of Advocacy for AARP MD **supports HB 161 Criminal Law-Exploitation of Vulnerable Adult or Elderly Individual – Undue Influence.** We thank Delegate Shetty for introducing this legislation.

HB 161 further defines “undue influence” as it pertains to the prohibition on the exploitation of a vulnerable adult or an elderly individual and adds factors the court must consider when determining whether property was obtained by undue influence.

AARP has a history of fighting for protections against elder financial exploitation and has been on the forefront of advocacy in support of federal and state laws and regulations preventing this type of abuse.

Generally, older adults trusting and polite – not in a rush to hang up on a caller. And older adults usually have more savings, more credit, and might own their home. That’s what makes them attractive to thieves. The exploitations costs Americans more than 3 billion dollars every year. Criminals take advantage of older persons by doing things like forging their signature, coercing them into signing a will, turn over a deed, give them cash or give them large denomination gift cards. The affects can be financially ruinous, physically draining, and emotionally devastating for the victim and the victim’s family.

AARP believes that States should enact and enforce laws that make it a criminal offense, with enhanced penalties, to abuse, neglect, or exploit a vulnerable individual.

AARP MD respectfully requests a favorable report for HB 161. For questions, please contact Tammy Bresnahan at [tbresnahan@aarp.org](mailto:tbresnahan@aarp.org) or by calling 410-302-8451.

The AARP logo with the tagline "Real Possibilities" in a light gray font.