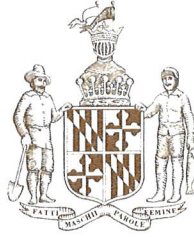


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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 9, 2023

SB 228

Department of Aging – Dementia Care Coordinator & Dementia Care Navigation Programs

Good Afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee;

Thank you for the opportunity to present Senate Bill 228, Dementia Care Coordinator and Dementia Care Navigation Programs. SB228 is a cross-file of HB614, there is a sponsor amendment to fully conform this legislation to its cross-file.

This legislation, as amended, creates an outreach program at each of Maryland's local aging departments to connect with individuals who may have dementia and their caregivers. They would:

- refer people to care providers,
- offer educational programs about how to manage dementia, and
- help people concerned with their cognitive function.

The bill provides funding to the Department of Aging, so they can administer and evaluate this program statewide, and distribute it equitably to local jurisdictions to help our seniors.

Although this legislation was introduced last year, however it did not advance out of this committee. Delegate Cullison and I worked on this bill over the interim. The bill:

- Addresses the prior concerns of the Department of Aging and affords them sufficient resources to staff this program internally;
- Provides more resources for local departments of Aging.
- Allocates funding based on the need.
- Provides to aid caregivers and "individuals who demonstrate symptoms of dementia that interfere with activities with daily living."

We all struggle to grasp a disease that gets progressively worse—both for individuals with it and certainly their caregivers—as our loved ones may refuse to eat, get increasingly angry, have difficulty communicating, wander, and so much more.

I respectfully request a favorable report on SB 228.