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**SB 228 Department of Aging – Long Term Care and Dementia Care Navigation Programs
FAVORABLE
Health and Government Operations Committee
March 30, 2023**

Good afternoon, Chair Peña-Melnyk and members of the House Health and Government Operations Committee. I am Tammy Bresnahan. I am the Director of Advocacy for AARP Maryland. AARP is the largest membership-based organizations for individuals 50 and over in the United States and has over 870,000 members in Maryland. AARP Maryland supports **SB 228 Department of Aging –Long-Term Care and Dementia Care Navigation Programs.**

SB 228 requires the Department of Aging to oversee and train the staff of long-term care and dementia care navigation programs to disseminate best practices and collect interaction data to ensure statewide program integrity.

According to the Center for Disease Control about one in five older Americans has a mental health condition. Among Medicare beneficiaries age 65 and older, the most common are depression, anxiety, and other neurocognitive impairments. In addition, one in ten Americans according to Alzheimer's have dementia. By 2030, in Maryland it is expected to increase by 30 percent.

SB 228 also states that the work of the long-term care dementia care navigation programs shall be guided by the recommendations of The Virginia I. Jones Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Council. The Council beginning in fiscal 2023 is a collaborative of state agencies, human services professionals, health care professionals and stakeholders from around the state working in areas of dementia services and brain health related to the human cognition. The council's focus is to examine the needs of individuals with Alzheimer's and related disorders, their caregivers and to Identify methods through which the State can most effectively and efficiently assist in meeting those need. And finally, to develop and promote strategies to encourage brain health and reduce cognitive decline.

For these reason, AARP Maryland respectfully request a favorable report for SB 228. If there are questions or follow up needed, please contact me at tbresnahan@aarp.org or by calling 410-302-8451.

