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SB 534 Preserve Telehealth Access Act of 2023
FAVORABLE
House Health and Government Operations Committee
March 21, 2023

Good Afternoon Chair Peña-Melnyk and members of the Health and Government Operations Committee. My name is Tammy Bresnahan and I am the Senior Director of Advocacy for AARP MD. As you may know, AARP Maryland is one of the largest membership-based organizations in Maryland, encompassing over 850,000 members. I am here today representing AARP MD and its members in support of **SB 534 Preserve Telehealth Access Act of 2023**. We thank Senator Gile for introducing this legislation.

AARP is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, nationwide organization that helps people turn their goals and dreams into real possibilities, strengthens communities and fights for the issues that matter most to families such as healthcare, employment and income security, retirement planning, affordable utilities and protection from financial abuse.

SB 534 extends the date for telehealth services from sunseting in 2023 to 2025.

Telehealth holds great potential for helping older Marylanders looking to maintain their independence and enjoy living at home longer. It offers a range of options to make healthcare easier and more accessible. From tracking vital signs with remote monitoring devices, to communicating easily with a nurse through a web portal, to receiving on-the-spot care from a doctor via video chat, telehealth aims to make life easier.

Telehealth also shows great potential for making healthcare more affordable, convenient, and self-directed, which may explain its rapid growth. For many caregivers, finding time to help manage their older family member's health issues can be difficult. Accompanying family/partners/friends to frequent doctor's appointments, coordinating care, and managing health records can prove challenging. Thankfully, telehealth makes the process easier for both older Marylanders and their caregivers, helping both keep their independence.

AARP MD encourages state governments to pass laws that encourage coverage and payment of telehealth services (including by removing unnecessary restrictions that limit beneficiary access) for eligible beneficiaries to improve access and the quality of care, allow patients to remain safely in the community, and assist with care transitions from institutional to community settings.



AARP supports SB 534 Preserve Telehealth Access Act 2023 and respectfully requests the Committee issue a favorable report. For questions please contact Tammy Bresnahan at tbresnahan@aarp.org .