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MAYOR

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**SB 228**

March 30, 2023

**TO:** Members of the House Health and Government Operations Committee

**FROM:** Nina Themelis, Interim Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations

**RE:** Senate Bill 228 – Department of Aging – Long-Term Care and Dementia Care Navigation Programs

**POSITION: Support**

Chair Peña-Melnyk, Vice-Chair Cullison, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** Senate Bill (SB) 228.

SB 228 enables the Maryland Department of Aging and local Area Agencies on Aging to respond to the growing number of Marylanders with Alzheimer's Disease and related disorders (ADRD). The bill creates a dementia care navigation program within the Department and the Area Agencies. The navigators will assist and guide caregivers of persons with dementia, build community awareness of dementia, and strengthen the ability of Area Agencies on Aging to provide services to the growing number of Marylanders with ADRD and their family caregivers.

The Alzheimer's Association estimates that 110,000 Marylanders 65 and over had Alzheimer's Disease in 2020, and that this number will grow to 130,000 by 2025. The data further indicates that the burden of this disease falls disproportionately on minority communities; the Alzheimer's Association estimates that older African Americans are about two times more likely than older whites to have Alzheimer's or other dementias, and that older Hispanics are about one to one-half times more likely than older whites to have Alzheimer's or other dementias.

For the above reasons, the BCA respectfully requests a **favorable** report on SB 228.