



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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TO: Delegate Luke Clippinger, Chair
Delegate David Moon, Vice Chair
Judiciary Committee Members

FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus

DATE: March 20, 2023

RE: HB1191 Task Force on Preventing and Countering Elder Abuse

The MLLC supports HB1191 Task Force on Preventing and Countering Elder Abuse

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation that improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a crucial voice in the development of public policy that uplifts the Latino community and benefits the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB1191.

Elder abuse is a pervasive issue in the Latino community. Latino communities face the double-edged sword of both being prime candidates for the potential for abuse, and also prevalent factors that limit reporting. Conditions that have been found to be associated with family abuse are circumstances that Latino communities struggle with too frequently due to America's sociopolitical economic system; such as discrimination in educational and employment opportunities thus perpetuating the economic dependency, family stress, psychopathology, and poverty associated with abuse.¹ Additionally, many Latinos have a preference to receive in-home care and rely on family caregivers.² Moreover, limited English proficiency, economic insecurity, neighborhood seclusion, a tradition of resolving conflicts within the family, and mistrust of authorities impedes abuse reporting.³ A 2012 study discovered that 40.4% of Latino elders experienced some form of abuse and/or neglect within the previous year; with nearly 25% reporting psychological abuse, 10.7% indicating physical assault, 9% reporting sexual abuse, 16.7% indicating financial exploitation, and 11.7% were neglected by their caregivers.⁴ Of the older adults that were abused, only 1.5 percent reported the abuse to Adult Protective Services.⁵ Immigrants in particular considerably underreport mistreatment due to family preference to seek resolution on their own, as well as a fear of involvement of the authorities.⁶ Latinos make up 12% of the population of the state of Maryland, 5% of which are 65 or older, representing approximately 40,000 citizens; a significant population in our state.⁷

HB1191 would establish the Task Force on Preventing and Countering Elder Abuse to study existing laws, policies, and practices relating to elder abuse and crimes commonly committed against older adults; and report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly. This would ensure that our state is adequately combating the epidemic of elder abuse.

For these reasons, the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on HB1191.

¹ [Montoya, V. \(1997\). Understanding and combating elder abuse in Hispanic communities. Journal of Elder Abuse & Neglect, 9\(2\), 5-17.](#)

² [Mistreatment of Latino Elders. \(2014\). National Center on Elder Abuse \(NCEA\).](#)

³ [DeLiema, M., Gassoumis, Z. D., Homeier, D. C., & Wilber, K. H. \(2012\). Determining Prevalence and Correlates of Elder Abuse Using Promotores: Low Income Immigrant Latinos Report High Rates of Abuse and Neglect. Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, 60\(7\), 1333-1339.](#)

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ [Turner, M. \(2017, January 18\). Elder Abuse in Latino Communities. New York City Elder Abuse \(NYCEAC\).](#)

⁶ [Mistreatment of Latino Elders. \(2014\). National Center on Elder Abuse \(NCEA\).](#)

⁷ [American Community Survey: Sex by Age \(Hispanic or Latino\). \(2021\). United States Census Bureau.](#)