



One Park Place | Suite 475 | Annapolis, MD 21401-3475
1-866-542-8163 | Fax: 410-837-0269
aarp.org/md | md@aarp.org | twitter: @aarpm
facebook.com/aarpm

**HB 760 Maryland Legal Services Corporation – Affordable Life, Wills, and Estate
Planning
House Judiciary Committee
FAVORABLE
March 1, 2023**

Good afternoon Chair Clippinger and members of the House Judiciary Committee. I am Tammy Bresnahan, Senior Director of Advocacy for AARP Maryland. AARP Maryland supports HB 760. On behalf of our almost 900,000 members, we would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of HB 760 Maryland Legal Services Corporation—Affordable Life, Wills and Estate Planning. We thank Delegate Embry for introducing HB 760.

HB 760 establishes the Affordable Life, Wills, and Estate Planning for Seniors Program within the Maryland Legal Services Corporation (MLSC) to provide seniors with moderate financial means access to affordable civil law-related services.

Older adults have unique health and social needs. Many are on fixed incomes. Often, older adults depend on government benefits and services that have complex requirements. Navigating this system can require access to competent legal assistance. As such, elder law has become a recognized specialization within the legal profession. Appropriate certification is required.

Policymakers should expand access to free or reduced-cost legal services for older adults with low and moderate incomes. This includes exploring legislative reforms to expand access to counsel in civil cases in which basic needs are at stake, such as eviction and debt claims proceedings.

Policymakers should encourage the implementation of innovative programs to expand access to legal services. These could include medical-legal partnerships. They should promote, through technical assistance, best practices in linking health and legal services within the health care setting.

Program to provide assistance to low- and moderate-income seniors with the preparation of legal documents, civil proceedings, and other matters.

Thank you and for these reasons, AARP MD ask for a favorable report on HB 760. If you have questions, please contact Tammy Bresnahan at tbresnahan@aarp.org or by calling 410-302-8451.

