

March 1, 2024

Senator Ariana Kelly
James Senate Office Building, Room 222
11 Bladen St.
Annapolis, Maryland

Subject: Letter of Support for SB-875 (2024 Session), Miriam Kelty Aging and Senior Social Connection Hub and Spoke Pilot Program

Dear Senator Kelly,

I am pleased to provide this letter, both on behalf of the Montgomery County Villages Consortium and on behalf of Little Falls Village, a Montgomery County Village serving residents of zip code 20816. This letter is in strong support of SB-875 (and its companion Bill, HB 1103).

The establishment of the Miriam Kelty Aging and Social Connection Hub and Spoke Pilot Program offers a rare opportunity to extend the development of the Village model to all Maryland seniors.

Villages can provide a very wide range of support services to those who choose to age-in-place; from transportation to medical appointments and shopping, to providing social, cultural, and education events, and services such as assistance with computers, lawn care, and minor home repairs.

Many Villages are well-developed and have the ability to share resources. Some have limited capabilities while other areas are in need of outreach to establish a Village. The hub and spoke model provides the opportunity to extend support to Villages across the spectrum, supporting well-developed Villages and allowing them to share resources, expanding those with limited capabilities, and providing outreach to establish Villages in areas with no Villages in place.

My Village, Little Falls Village is a good example of how one Village can help others- by sharing resources and expertise. Little Falls Village is a well-developed Village with multiple programs and support activities. We are the fiscal sponsor of the Consortium, helping the Consortium to begin its work. We also currently share programs and events with other Villages and plan to extend this approach, as well as our expertise, through the Consortium.

Montgomery County is a perfect place for a pilot program as it contains the entire spectrum of Village types and situations. SB-875 is an excellent investment in helping Maryland seniors maintain and improve their quality of life.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments in support of SB-875. We commend you for introducing this Bill and hope it will find support.

Sincerely,

Michael Wehr

H. Michael Wehr
Vice-President, Montgomery County Consortium; Co-Vice-President, Little Falls Village