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Bill: SB 613 - State Board of Long-Term Care Administrators - Requirements for Assisted Living Managers

Committee: Senate Finance Committee

Position: Favorable with Amendments

Date: February 29, 2024

On behalf of the more than 110,000 Marylanders living with Alzheimer's, the Alzheimer's Association supports with amendments *SB 613 - State Board of Long-Term Care Administrators - Requirements for Assisted Living Managers*.

SB 613 is extending the date - from October 1, 2024 to July 1, 2026 - by which individuals must be licensed by the State Board of Long-Term Care Administrators before practicing as an assisted living manager in Maryland. It also alters the requirements for the manager training course that assisted living managers are required to complete and alters the requirements for serving as an interim assisted living manager.

In 2023, among older adults nationwide living in residential facilities, including assisted living, 34% have some form of Alzheimer's or other dementias.¹ Dating back to 2006, the Maryland Office of Health Care Quality (OHCQ) issued a report stating that residents in Assisted Living Facilities are frailer and have more memory issues than when OHCQ began regulating ALFs in 1996.²

In 2022, legislation passed to establish licensure requirements for Assisted Living Managers.³ The Alzheimer's Association supports the improved standard and strengthened oversight for assisted living managers. We also understand the challenges entailed in developing and implementing a new licensure requirement, and we appreciate the Board's submission of their mandated report regarding the status of implementation.⁴

Within the Board's report on implementation, they discussed challenges that had arisen in implementation, including staffing shortages and IT challenges. The Alzheimer's Association

¹ 2023 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures.

<https://www.alz.org/media/Documents/alzheimers-facts-and-figures.pdf>

² Maryland's Assisted Living Resident Assessment and Level of Care Scoring Tool, 2006.

https://health.maryland.gov/ohcq/AL/Docs/AL_Forms/al_tool_guide.pdf

³ SB 720/HB 1034 (2022) - State Board of Examiners of Nursing Home Administrators - Renaming, Licensure of Assisted Living Managers, and Penalties.

<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgaweb/Legislation/Details/sb0720/?ys=2022rs>

⁴ Report on the Status of Assisted Living Manager Licensing Required Under 2022 HB 1034.

[https://dlslibrary.state.md.us/publications/Exec/MDH/SB720Ch690HB1034Ch689\(4\)\(2022\).pdf](https://dlslibrary.state.md.us/publications/Exec/MDH/SB720Ch690HB1034Ch689(4)(2022).pdf)

supports an extension to ensure a smooth rollout of this important new licensure. However, we respectfully request the committee reconsider the length of the extension to 2025, and allow the Board to return next year if an extension into 2026 is needed. We also urge the committee to consider additional reporting requirements in the Board's annual report on implementation to include additional updates and timeline on staffing and software readiness, which are both important to the successful rollout and ensuring the Board can meet the extended deadline.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Megan Peters, Director of Government Affairs at mrpeters@alz.org with any questions.

SB 613 Amendments

On page 8, in line 1, after "Board" insert "**, INCLUDING THE STATUS OF VACANT POSITIONS,**"

Rationale: The Governor's proposed FY25 budget provides three positions for the Board. In the Board's October 2023 status report on implementation of licensure⁵ the Board shared that they had requested three additional positions to assist in areas such as licensing, compliance with regulatory requirements, investigation and disciplinary actions, fiscal management, and exam/education/training monitoring. If these new positions are approved in the FY25 budget, it will be important to receive updates on the status of these positions as they will be integral to building capacity at the Board to implement the new licensure requirement.

On page 8, in line 4, after "licenses" insert "**, INCLUDING A TIMELINE AND UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF ANY NECESSARY SYSTEM UPDATES**"

Rationale: In the Board's October 2023 status report on implementation of licensure, the Board shared that IT was not able to provide a guarantee that an electronic system would be operational by October 1, 2024. Having an operational software platform is key to a smooth rollout of a new licensure system, and any unexpected issues could delay the rollout of the licensure even further. Including additional reporting on estimated timelines and implementation of software updates will be important to ensure the Board is on track to meet the extended timeline.

⁵ Report on Status of Assisted Living Manager Licensing Required Under 2022 HB 1034
[https://dlslibrary.state.md.us/publications/Exec/MDH/SB720Ch690HB1034Ch689\(4\)\(2022\).pdf](https://dlslibrary.state.md.us/publications/Exec/MDH/SB720Ch690HB1034Ch689(4)(2022).pdf)