



Wes Moore | Governor

Aruna Miller | Lt. Governor

Carmel Roques | Secretary

Date: February 19, 2024

Bill Number: **HB874**

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

Committee: House Health and Government Operations Committee

MDOA Position: FAVORABLE

The Department of Aging (MDOA) submits this letter of support for House Bill 874 - State Board of Long Term Care Administrators - Requirements for Assisted Living Managers.

The Maryland Department of Aging (MDOA) serves as Maryland's State Unit of Aging, administering federal funding for core programs, overseeing the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) network at the local level that provides services, and planning for Maryland's older adult population. Pursuant to a recent Executive Order, in January 2024, MDOA launched the Longevity-Ready Maryland Initiative,¹ which will build upon existing efforts across state agencies, private and philanthropic sectors and other stakeholders to tackle real-life challenges throughout the lifespan, taking a whole-of-life and whole-of-government approach. Key goals of Longevity-Ready Maryland are for all Marylanders to lead lives that are healthy, financially secure, socially connected, purposeful - with increased access to affordable housing, healthcare and retirement needs. This includes access to high-quality assisted living options of different sizes, a critical long-term care sector that Maryland should promote growth in. Smaller assisted living facilities, with less than six residents, are particularly important for Maryland to devote attention to and promote their growth, as they can typically deliver a more affordable option in more residential community settings.

¹ See, Maryland Department of Aging: Longevity-Ready Maryland Initiative *available at:* <https://aging.maryland.gov/Pages/LRM.aspx>



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In 2022 when this body first legislated that all assisted living facilities should be included in the states training requirement, it did so with sound intent. As passed in 2022, there was a two-year window for assisted living facilities and their managers to come into compliance smoothly with this requirement. It could not have predicted that the standing up of the new Board of Long-Term Care Administrators would be delayed, making communication and implementation work around this new requirement minimal. Assisted living facilities of all sizes should have received early outreach from the Board of Long-Term Care Administrators about this new training requirement and clear guidance about where to access suitable training options for this requirement to take effect, with potential penalties, this fall. The proposed 18 month delay from October 1, 2024 to July 1, 2026, gives a reasonable extension of time for this training requirement to work as intended. The Department of Aging also supports the key modernizing language included in the HB874 around the method of training; making clear that 100% virtual, on-demand, pre-recorded approved training will be allowed. At the smallest assisted living facilities, this will go a long way to facilitate the assisted living manager completing this requirement.

For these reasons, the Department of Aging respectfully urges a favorable report for HB874. If you have any questions, please contact Andrea Nunez, Legislative Director, at andrea.nunez@maryland.gov or (443) 414-8183.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carmel Roques". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Carmel Roques
Secretary
Maryland Department of Aging