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Testimony of Paul Schwartz
February 1, 2024
House Ways & Means Committee
HB 32 – Income Tax - Caregiver Tax Credit

I am Paul Schwartz on behalf of the National Active & Retired Federal Employees – NARFE. I testify today in support of HB 32, which would provide a tax credit to Maryland caretakers who provide care and support to senior and other qualified family members.

From the recent valuable report from AARP entitled “Valuing the Invaluable,” we know that in 2021, about 38 million family caregivers in the U.S. provided an estimated 36 billion hours of care to adults with serious or

disabling health conditions with the economic value of these unpaid contributions totaling approximately \$600 billion. In Maryland, an estimated 760,000 caregivers provided about 710 million hours of care at an estimated value of \$12.5 billion.

Medicaid is more than a quarter of Maryland's budget And nursing homes account for a major portion of Medicaid expenditures.

Anything that extends the period of home care and delays entrance into nursing homes saves Maryland money There really is some truth to the saying: "You have to spend money to make money."

This is a prime example of that.

AND you cannot rely on the fiscal note because the fiscal note does NOT reflect the complete cost associated with the bill – any bill – because the Office of Legislative Services does not have the capability to calculate cost savings and incorporate that calculation into the fiscal note

They simply check with the Comptroller's office and take a hard count of lost tax revenue and give you that figure in the fiscal note without factoring in any cost savings by delaying entrance into nursing homes.

We are experiencing a decline in revenue due in large part to declining population. Let's keep the care recipient and the caregiver here in Maryland and not watch the caregiver move the care recipient to another state and lose their tax money including sales tax, fuel tax, property tax and state income tax to another more tax friendly state.

On behalf of the approximately 300,000 members of NARFE in Maryland as well as all MD seniors who desire to age in place, we strongly urge you to give a favorable report to HB 32.

Thank you.