



Written testimony of Elizabeth Carrier
to the House Appropriations Committee
February 4, 2025

On behalf of the Montgomery County Commission on Aging
In support of HB520

Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang and esteemed members of the House Appropriations Committee my name is Elizabeth Carrier and I live in District 16. I am pleased to have the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of HB520 State Personnel - Job Sharing Arrangements and Tri-Position Identification Number System (Maryland Workforce Retention, Recruitment, and Reentry Act).

I serve on the Montgomery County Commission on Aging (CoA) and am co-chair of the CoA's Aging in Community Committee. The CoA studies, investigates and works to remove conditions which may result in discrimination or prejudice because of age in areas such as employment, housing, recreation, education, and community services. I was a founder of Bradley Hills Village (BHV). BHV is an intergenerational non-profit organization in Bethesda. It is a "neighbor helping neighbor" model and provides social, educational, health, and cultural activities to help neighbors age in place. As an active member in BHV I have seen many examples of older adults moving to a job sharing/ part time status to extend their employment as they approach their retirement. In these situations, older adults have been able to mentor younger colleagues, provide continuity, remain engaged and in some instances tend to their personal health issues or caregiving commitments. These have been powerful examples of how older workers who remain in the workforce can increase productivity, improve morale, and can help other staff members benefit from a broader range of perspectives.

HB 520 will establish and test, to the extent practicable, a system that enables positions to be filled with part-time employees under certain job-sharing arrangements. Passage of this bill is important as it would help to address significant labor shortages and would employ a talented, often overlooked, labor pool of older adults. Over time, job sharing would have many of the following benefits:

- Retention of experience and knowledge.
- Increased flexibility.
- Mentorship and knowledge transfer: This ensures a smoother transfer of skills and knowledge within the organization.
- Improved Work-Life Balance.
- Cost-Effectiveness: Employers can avoid the costs associated with turnover, as job sharing can extend the careers of older workers.
- Reduced Burnout.

- Enhanced Continuity: Having two individuals share a role provides built-in coverage, ensuring that key tasks are handled consistently even if one employee is unavailable.

The Commission on Aging supports Bill 520 because this legislation positions the State as a leader in workforce inclusivity, fostering economic growth while supporting the talents and contributions of older workers and enhancing the well-being of all workers. By leveraging the unique advantages of job sharing, the State can create a supportive and productive environment that benefits employees of all ages. Maintaining and recruiting older workers is critical to the success of the State, employees, job seekers, and communities. Maryland's labor force is increasingly dependent on the older workers and this bill provides flexible work arrangements that can help promote an age-diverse workforce.

With great appreciation for this initiative and all good wishes for its success, we urge favorable consideration for HB520.

1/30/2025

