



Wes Moore | Governor

Aruna Miller | Lt. Governor

Carmel Roques | Secretary

Date: February 14, 2025

Bill Number: SB433

Bill Title: Office of Disability Employment Advancement and Policy and Maryland as a Model Employer Initiative - Established

Committee: Senate Finance

MDOA Position: FAVORABLE

The Department of Aging (MDOA) thanks the Chair and Committee members for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill (SB) 433 - Office of Disability Employment Advancement and Policy and Maryland as a Model Employer Initiative - Established.

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 an 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.

Establishing the Office of Disability Employment Advancement and Policy and the Maryland as a Model Employer Initiative will strengthen the state workforce's inclusivity for older workers and older workers with disabilities. As Maryland's older population continues to grow steadily, it is critical that more employers in Maryland adopt age-friendly policies and practices that value experience and accommodate diverse abilities. Doing so enhances financial stability, social engagement, the ability to live independently and makes it easier for older adults who are disabled to remain living in Maryland. This leadership from the state government will serve as an important model to other employers in Maryland while strengthening the state workforce.

¹ More on Longevity-Ready MD Initiative available at: <https://aging.maryland.gov/Pages/LRM.aspx>



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For these reasons, the Department of Aging respectfully urges a favorable report for Senate Bill 433. 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 flourish at the end.

Carmel Roques
Secretary
Maryland Department of Aging