



Testimony for SB 748
Public Health - Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias - Information on Prevalence and Treatment

March 4, 2025

Position: **Favorable**

Dear Chair Beidle and members of the Finance Committee:

My name is Ricarra Jones, and I am the Political Director with 1199SEIU- the largest healthcare union in the nation, where we represent over 10,000 healthcare workers in Maryland. 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East is Maryland's largest healthcare union, representing over 400,000 healthcare workers across the East Coast. We strongly support SB 748 to ensure we have accurate data on Alzheimer prevalence and hospitalization rates. SB 748 will also improve public health outreach and education that includes treatment options for Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

1199 SEIU is a proud partner of the Caring Across Maryland coalition which supports legislation that improves long term care services and care for those aging and with disability. Maryland has the highest prevalence of dementia in the country with higher proportion of prevalence among people of color. Maryland hospital systems, long term care, and home care service systems are caring for many patients that have Alzheimer's or dementia. SB 748 will improve public awareness of early treatment options and ensure accurate data of disease prevalence.

With over \$1 billion in annual Medicaid spending, addressing dementia requires a comprehensive approach. This legislation aims to improve public health education, data informed policy making, and put Maryland on the path towards lower prevalence and meeting patient needs with treatment options. 1199 SEIU urges a favorable report on SB 748.

Sincerely,

Ricarra Jones
Political Director
1199 SEIU United Healthcare Workers East
Ricarra.jones@1199.org