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HB 576 Health Care Facilities – Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Programs – Video Recordings
House Health and Government Operations Committee
February 13, 2025
FAVORABLE

Good afternoon, Chair Peña-Melnyk and Members of the House Health and Government Operations Committee. My name is Tammy Bresnahan; I serve as the Senior Director of Advocacy for AARP Maryland. AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to helping people aged 50 and older live their best lives. With nearly 38 million members nationwide—over 850,000 of whom live in Maryland—we advocate on key issues affecting older adults, including health security, financial stability, and personal independence.

In Maryland, AARP is committed to protecting the rights, dignity, and well-being of older residents, particularly those in vulnerable situations, such as in nursing homes and assisted living facilities. We work closely with state leaders, community organizations, and stakeholders to ensure older Marylanders have access to safe, quality care and are treated with respect. Through advocacy, education, and outreach, we champion stronger regulations and oversight to protect against abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Our mission is clear: to make Maryland a state where older residents can live with peace of mind, knowing their safety and security are prioritized.

We strongly support **HB 576 Health Care Facilities - Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Programs - Video Recordings**. This bill is a critical step toward improving the safety and well-being of older Marylanders living in congregate settings. Inspections of these facilities have revealed ongoing concerns, emphasizing the need for enhanced protections against mistreatment.

Key Provisions of HB 576:

Video Surveillance in Common Areas: The bill requires nursing homes and assisted living programs to install and maintain video recording equipment in shared areas. This will allow for continuous monitoring and early identification of any harmful behaviors, ensuring residents are treated with dignity and respect.

- **Access to Video Footage:** Recorded footage must be available, upon request, to law enforcement and state officials when needed for investigations or official duties. This provision is vital to holding wrongdoers accountable and strengthening oversight.

As an example of successful legislation, in November 2020, a state law was enacted allowing video monitoring in assisted living and continuum-of-care facilities, building on prior regulations that permitted such monitoring in nursing homes. The law—supported by AARP Oklahoma—

ensures families and guardians can monitor the welfare of loved ones remotely. It also protects residents from eviction or retaliation for using video equipment.

AARP's Recommendations for Video Monitoring Legislation:

- States should establish the right for residents or their legally recognized decision-makers to use video and technology for monitoring care, documenting services, and facilitating virtual visitation.
- Protections must be in place to safeguard roommates' privacy, and for residents unable to provide consent, a balance must be struck between the benefits of video technology and privacy rights.
- Facilities should be prohibited from discharging or refusing to admit residents who opt for video monitoring.
- Residents and their families must be notified if video equipment is used by the facility or a roommate.

We are grateful to the Maryland Attorney General and his team for their leadership on this important issue. Their commitment to safeguarding vulnerable residents highlights the urgency of passing HB 576. We respectfully urge the committee to give this bill favorable consideration. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at **tbresnahan@aarp.org** or by calling **410-302-8451**. Thank you for your time and consideration.