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**House Bill 1291 Health Facilities - Assisted Living Programs - Family Councils**  
**House Health and Government Operations**  
**March 4, 2025**  
**FAVORABLE**

Good afternoon, Chair Beidle and Members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Tammy Bresnahan, and I am the Senior Director of Advocacy for AARP Maryland. On behalf of AARP and our more than 850,000 members across the state, we strongly support House Bill 1291 – Health Facilities - Assisted Living Programs - Family Councils.

AARP has long advocated for policies that improve the quality of care, transparency, and accountability in assisted living facilities. HB 1291 is an essential step toward ensuring that families have a formal and independent voice in shaping the care and well-being of their loved ones in assisted living programs.

This bill authorizes and supports the creation of family councils in assisted living programs with 15 or more beds. Family councils serve a critical role in advocating for residents, fostering open communication with facility administrators, and ensuring that concerns about care, staffing, and quality of life are addressed. The bill also ensures that councils transition to leadership by family members while allowing facilities to provide administrative support when needed.

**Why is this bill important?**

- Empowers families and residents – Family councils provide a structured way for families to advocate for their loved ones and collaborate on solutions to improve care.
- Increases transparency and accountability – Open dialogue between families and facility administrators leads to better oversight and higher quality care.
- Enhances resident well-being – Family engagement has been shown to improve residents' quality of life, emotional well-being, and overall care experiences.

**Why AARP Supports HB 1291**

AARP believes that residents of assisted living facilities deserve the highest quality of care and that families should have a meaningful role in advocating for their loved ones. Family councils are proven tools that help bridge the gap between residents, families, and facility staff, ensuring that concerns are heard and addressed in a collaborative and constructive manner.

We thank Senator Henson for championing this important legislation and urge the committee to issue a favorable report on HB 1291 to strengthen family engagement and improve assisted

living care in Maryland. For follow up or questions, feel free to contact me at [tbresnahan@aarp.org](mailto:tbresnahan@aarp.org) or by calling 410-507-6972.