![LeadingAge Maryland logo]

TO: House Health and Government Operations Committee

FROM: LeadingAge Maryland

SUBJECT: House Bill 1004, Public Health - Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias - Information on Prevalence and Treatment

DATE: February 28, 2025

POSITION: Favorable

LeadingAge Maryland supports House Bill 1004, Public Health - Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias - Information on Prevalence and Treatment.

LeadingAge Maryland is a community of more than 159 not-for-profit aging services organizations serving residents and clients through continuing care retirement communities, affordable senior housing, assisted living, nursing homes and home and community-based services. Members of LeadingAge Maryland provide health care, housing, and services to more than 20,000 older persons each year. Our mission is to be the trusted voice for aging in Maryland, and our vision is that Maryland is a state where older adults have access to the services they need, when they need them, in the place they call home.

House Bill 1004 will establish annual data reporting on dementia prevalence through the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and Chesapeake Regional Information Services for Patients (CRISP) and it will update requirements that dementia related public health outreach programs include information on treatment.

Dementia is a growing public health crisis in Maryland that demands urgent attention. Our state has the highest estimated prevalence of Alzheimer's disease in the nation, yet we lack comprehensive, state-specific data to guide policies and programs. Without accurate data, we cannot effectively monitor trends, identify disparities, or assess the impact of interventions.

To address this gap, we support this legislation to establish an annual, online dementia data dashboard. This dashboard would track prevalence and other key dementia-related metrics, ensuring policymakers, public health officials, researchers, and healthcare professionals have the information needed to drive effective strategies. This initiative directly aligns with Goal 5 of the State Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias—enhancing data capabilities to improve outcomes.

Recent FDA-approved treatments have the potential to alter the progression of Alzheimer's disease, offering hope beyond symptom management. Early intervention provides individuals

and families with crucial time to plan for the future, adopt beneficial lifestyle changes, participate in clinical trials, and maximize quality of life.

Building on the 2021 passage of HB 119/SB 313, which expanded outreach on dementia risk reduction and early detection, we support legislation ensuring state-led dementia awareness efforts also include information on newly available treatments. Marylanders deserve to be fully informed about all options following a diagnosis.

By advancing data-driven policymaking and improving public awareness, we can take meaningful steps toward a future without dementia.

For these reasons, LeadingAge Maryland respectfully requests a <u>favorable report</u> on House Bill 1004.

For more information, please contact Aaron Greenfield at 410.446.1992 or aaron@agreenfieldlaw.com