

Testimony Before the House Judiciary Committee

January 30, 2025

House Bill 246 - Human Services – Adult Protective Services

**** Support ****

The National Association of Social Workers is the largest professional association of social workers in the country, and the Maryland Chapter represents social workers across the state. On behalf of the National Association of Social Workers, Maryland Chapter (NASW-MD) Committee on Aging, we would like to express our support for House Bill 246 – Human Services – Adult Protective Services.

As social workers, we are in favor of this bill because it streamlines the sharing of information between Adult Protective Services (APS) and an expanded definition of health practitioners, to include certain emergency medical services providers when APS is involved in a mutual case. Emergency medical providers, such as paramedics with Fire and Rescue, or the Chief Medical Examiner's Office, could provide invaluable information during an Adult Protective Services investigation, and having the ability to collaborate on such matters would enhance the ability of Adult Protective Services to prevent or mitigate risk of maltreatment of abuse, neglect, exploitation or self-neglect.

This bill changes the Adult Protective Services statute around confidentiality, and would enhance communication and collaboration with key partners, emergency medical providers, who often see elder/vulnerable adult abuse and neglect first-hand. This bill opens the door for information-sharing with federal and state protective services agencies, and would accelerate that information sharing, and thus support the timely implementation of safety and service plans for adults with disabilities at risk.

For these reasons, we ask that you give a favorable report on House Bill 246.

Respectfully,

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