



PO Box 34
Sykesville, MD 21784

TO: House Appropriations Committee
FROM: LeadingAge Maryland
SUBJECT: Senate Bill 340, Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman - Mandatory Appropriation
DATE: April 7, 2026
POSITION: Favorable

LeadingAge Maryland respectfully requests a favorable report for Senate Bill 340 Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman - Mandatory Appropriation.

LeadingAge Maryland is a community of more than 150 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.

Senate Bill 340 requires the Governor to include in the annual budget bill a minimum \$2,000,000 appropriation for the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman from certain money remitted by managed care organizations.

The Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman is essential to safeguarding the health, safety, welfare, and rights of Marylanders who reside in nursing facilities and other long-term care settings. As an independent advocate, the Ombudsman investigates complaints, resolves disputes, ensures access to legal and administrative remedies, and provides critical oversight that complements the efforts of providers and regulatory agencies. This office represents the frontline defense against abuse, neglect, and inadequate care, and its work directly contributes to the quality of life for our state's most vulnerable residents.

SB 340 appropriately recognizes that such a vital consumer protection function cannot be subject to the uncertainties of the annual budget process. By requiring the Governor to include a mandatory appropriation of at least \$2,000,000 from managed care organization remittances—and providing for a general fund backfill if those revenues are insufficient—this legislation ensures that the Ombudsman's office maintains the financial stability necessary to carry out its statutory duties. Dedicated funding ensures that resident advocacy does not compete with other

discretionary priorities for limited general fund dollars. It affirms that protecting long-term care residents is a core state responsibility, not an optional service.

For these reasons, LeadingAge Maryland respectfully requests a favorable report for Senate Bill 340.