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FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

SB 123: Oversight Committee on Quality of Care in Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Facilities - Membership

Senator Beidle and Vice-Chair Hayes,
Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on SB 123, legislation which alters the membership of the NH/AL Oversight committee. Thank you also to Chair Beidle, for her long-time commitment to this issue, and for long serving as an active committee member.

I write with extensive experience serving on this committee, including during the pandemic, where I chaired the subcommittee which wrote its annual report. I also note, for the purpose of this testimony, the 2025 lawsuit against the MD Department of Health for lapsed and insufficient nursing home inspections. The work and consistent meetings of this committee are essential.

This committee, as designed, benefits from having the Secretary of Aging as its chair—not industry, not consumers, but ideally the Secretary as a consistent non-partisan advocate for seniors across Maryland. I urge the committee to not alter the chairmanship of the committee.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

*This committee was first created in 2000; today, there is an opportunity to update the committee membership — with the appropriate number of elected officials, and their correct committees — **and also addressing organizations codified into law which no longer actively exist***

As such, I ask for a favorable with amendments report from the committee.

First Proposed Amendment

DELETE: 6 (vii) One representative of United Seniors of Maryland;

REPLACE WITH: 6 (vii) One representative of the Maryland Continuing Care Residents Association

Rationale:

United Seniors of Maryland, or USM, was a non-profit organization. While active for many years, USM has not filed a 990 tax form for some time and does not maintain an active website. Although a representative of USM currently serves on the Oversight Committee, her appointment derives from a nomination made many years ago, when USM was active. Given that USM no longer exists for all intents and purposes, its representation is not appropriate.

Alternatively, MaCCRA is an active organization, with an ongoing voice in Annapolis on issues related to long-term care and seniors. They are a justifiable replacement for USM.

Second Amendment

DELETE: 7 (viii) One representative of Voices for Quality Care;

REPLACE WITH: 7 (viii) One attorney representing the Public Justice Center of Maryland

Rationale:

Much like USM, Voices for Quality Care (V4QC) did active and important advocacy in Annapolis for many years. Yet a quick search shows their website (voicesforqualitycare.org), once featured in its testimony given in Annapolis, now re-directs to a Hong Kong lottery website. Additionally, a look at the [Oversight Committee website](#) shows 1) no current member from V4QC among many listed; and 2) in meeting minutes, no individual currently listed to represent V4QC.

PJC, a vital Baltimore-based non-profit organization, has done critical work in recent years in Annapolis on issues related to workplace justice and the wages of long-term care workers. For an Oversight committee focused on healthcare quality, their voice — elevating the issues of the invaluable long-term care workforce — is an essential addition to modernize this 26-year-old committee.