



Maryland
Long-Term Care
Ombudsman Program

Date: January 30, 2026

Bill Number: **SB 240**

Bill Title: Office of Health Care Quality Stakeholder Advisory Council - Establishment

Committee: Finance

**Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Position: FAVORABLE WITH
AMENDMENTS**

The Maryland Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program thanks the Chair and Committee members for the opportunity to submit this testimony for Senate Bill (SB) 240 - Office of Health Care Quality Stakeholder Advisory Council - Establishment.

The Maryland Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (Ombudsman Program) deeply values the work of the Office of Health Care Quality (OHCQ) and has appreciated the collaborative and professional relationship our offices share in promoting quality care and resident rights in long-term care homes. That partnership is essential to ensuring accountability, transparency and responsiveness within Maryland's long-term care system.

We respectfully wish to offer two points for the Committee's consideration:

- First, any advisory body guiding OHCQ should include voices that represent the experiences and needs of long-term care residents and their families. The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, by federal and state law, serves as an independent advocate for those residents and is uniquely positioned to contribute that perspective.
- Second, should SB 240 move forward, we strongly request that a representative of the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman be included among the designated members of the advisory council. This would ensure that the council's recommendations reflect not only regulatory perspectives but also the lived experience and advocacy work that drive quality improvement in care.

We appreciate OHCQ's ongoing partnership and share its goal of maintaining high standards for facility oversight and resident safety. We look forward to continuing this essential collaboration, whether through existing channels or as a participant on any future advisory council.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please contact Karrie Craig, State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, at karrie.craig@maryland.gov or (410) 940-1721.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karrie Craig".

Karrie Craig
State Long-Term Care Ombudsman