

Cherilynn Parks Letter of Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Ilyana Kadushin

Position: FAV

This testimony is in support of *Maryland HB 945 (2026 session), titled "Nursing Homes - Complaints - Notification and Consultation,"* requires the *Maryland Department of Health* to notify and consult with local health departments when investigating nursing home complaints that allege actual harm to residents.

I am a Memory Care Director and Activities Director with a bachelor's in Therapeutic Recreation and a certificate in gerontology and Activity Director Certified, National Council, Certified Dementia Practitioner)

I have 20 years experience in skilled nursing setting doing recreational activities with senior citizens. The Maryland state survey team is supposed to be helping us with these audits, while the real problem stems from staffing shortages. Many facilities I've worked in during our annual survey has gone through change of ownership, change of administrative staff and doesn't take accountability for any of the complaints that have happened prior to the survey team. Often times documentation can't be found about the incident and new staff have no knowledge of how to prevent it from happening again.

-Cherilynn Parks

Ilyana Kadushin Letter of Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Ilyana Kadushin

Position: FAV



STORIES LOVE MUSIC INC
Ilyana Kadushin
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This testimony is in support of *Maryland HB 945 (2026 session), titled "Nursing Homes - Complaints - Notification and Consultation,"* requires the *Maryland Department of Health* to notify and consult with local health departments when investigating nursing home complaints that allege actual harm to residents.

My name is Ilyana Kadushin and since 2017 I have been the Executive Director of *Stories Love Music*, a 501 c3 that designed and offers a personalized training program for professional and family caregivers who work with senior citizens in memory care units, assisted living facilities, nursing homes, hospitals and private homes. I have seen firsthand how challenging working in senior care can be and how when those challenges are not dealt with, have led to employee retention issues and a massive log of complaints in these nursing home environments, we are well beyond the tipping point. *Maryland's Office of Health Care Quality* is not adequately supervising the care of Maryland nursing home patients. OHQC is leading the country in the percent of overdue nursing home surveys, caused, in part, by a lack of surveyors. Maryland's surveyors are required to be RN's and the RN continued staffing shortage has impacted the state's own oversight mechanism. Maryland is one of only three states in the country that have failed to conduct annual surveys in over 80% of their nursing facilities in the past 12 months. (Overdue Recertification Surveys Report, Quality, Certification and Oversight 10 Office of Health Care Quality, Annual Report and Staffing Analysis FY21-FY24)

Creating better channels of communication between nursing homes and local health departments; to respond and consult with local resources is absolutely vital for this ongoing issue in senior care.

Thank you,

Ilyana Kadushin

HB 945 - FAV - FIN - ALZ Association.pdf

Uploaded by: Megan Peters

Position: FAV



Bill: HB 945 - Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Facilities - Notification of Investigations and Establishment of the Health Care Quality Improvement Initiative

Committee: Senate Finance Committee

Position: Favorable

Date: March 31, 2026

On behalf of the 127,200 Marylanders living with Alzheimer's disease and the many others with another type of dementia, the Alzheimer's Association supports HB 945. This bill requires the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) to notify and consult with local health departments whenever an investigation is initiated into a nursing home complaint alleging harm to a resident. As amended, the bill also establishes the Health Care Quality Improvement Initiative, a statewide effort to strengthen quality of care across both nursing homes and assisted living programs.

HB 945 addresses a critical area of long-term care quality that impacts many Marylanders living with dementia who rely on these long-term care settings for care and safety. By requiring that MDH alerts and coordinates with local health departments when a harm-related investigation begins at a nursing home, the bill supports a more timely, informed, and community-responsive oversight process. Local health officials bring essential contextual knowledge that can improve the effectiveness and completeness of state investigations.

In addition, the Alzheimer's Association supports HB 945's amendments establishing the Health Care Quality Improvement Initiative. By creating this Initiative, which calls for cross-agency collaboration with state leadership, HB 945 recognizes that lasting improvements in long-term care quality cannot occur in silos. The Initiative is charged with identifying strategies to enhance the quality of care across nursing homes and assisted living programs, improve affordability and accessibility, and ensure that Maryland makes the best possible use of available data and statewide expertise. Residents with dementia often have complex medical needs, rely on staff with specialized training, and face heightened risks when quality lapses occur. A coordinated Initiative, supported and staffed by MDH, ensures that Maryland can identify challenges and guide improvement efforts.

For these reasons, the Alzheimer's Association urges a favorable report on HB 945. Please contact Megan Peters, Director of Government Affairs at mrpeters@alz.org with any questions.

HB 945 - FIN - MDH - LOSAA final.pdf

Uploaded by: Meghan Lynch

Position: FAV



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Meena Seshamani, M.D., Ph.D., Secretary
March 31, 2026

The Honorable Pamela Beidle
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: House Bill 945 – Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Facilities - Notification of Investigations and Establishment of the Health Care Quality Improvement Initiative – Letter of Support as Amended

Dear Chair Beidle and Committee members:

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) respectfully submits this letter of support as amended for House Bill (HB) 945- Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Facilities - Notification of Investigations and Establishment of the Health Care Quality Improvement Initiative.

As amended, HB 945 requires the Office of Health Care Quality (OHCQ) to notify the Local Health Department (LHD) for the county in which the nursing home is located within 24 hours, after initiating an investigation that alleges actual harm or immediate jeopardy. This notification promotes collaboration and coordination between OHCQ and LHDs when high priority investigations are initiated.

Further, HB 945 as amended establishes the Health Care Quality Improvement Initiative within the Department. The “QI Initiative” shall be carried out by a two year task force whose primary purpose is to identify strategies to improve the quality of care, as well as affordability and accessibility of services, with a focus on nursing home and assisted living programs.

The QI Initiative consists of key state agencies dedicated to advancing health care and requires collaboration with other stakeholders when studying policy recommendations. As amended, HB 945 represents a thoughtful and balanced approach to efforts to further strengthen oversight and improve the quality of care across Maryland’s nursing homes and assisted living providers. The bill creates a collaborative, transparent framework for developing meaningful policy recommendations to the Secretary, with input from subject matter experts and the public, while protecting confidential medical review committee material that is not subject to public disclosure.

The Department remains committed to patient safety, accountability and continuous quality improvement and asks for a favorable report on HB 945 as amended. If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Meghan Lynch, Director of Governmental Affairs at [Meghan.Lynch@maryland.gov](mailto: Meghan.Lynch@maryland.gov).

Sincerely,

Meena Seshamani, M.D., Ph.D
Secretary of Health

HB0945 - crossover bill - FAV - Nursing Homes - Co

Uploaded by: Richard KAP Kaplowitz

Position: FAV

HB0945 Crossover Bill RichardKaplowitz FAV

03/31/2026

Richard Keith Kaplowitz

Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON CROSSOVER BILL HB#0945- POSITION: FAVORABLE

Nursing Homes - Complaints - Notification and Consultation

TO: Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and members of the Finance Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of crossover bill HB#0945, **Nursing Homes - Complaints - Notification and Consultation**

This bill is personal to me. My late son was in a long-term care facility for a number of years from 2019 – 2023. We jointly consulted with the Health Care Ombudsman at the Frederick County Department of Health on multiple occasions. This bill will set a fixed time for response by state and local health departments adjudicating complaints of nursing home activity featuring possible harm to the patient population.

The bill states the Department shall initiate an investigation into a nursing home complaint alleging actual harm within 10 business days after receiving the complaint.

If the department initiates an investigation of a nursing home complaint ... the department shall:

- notify immediately the local health department for the county in which the nursing home is located;
- to the extent practicable within the time requirements established consult and coordinate with the local health officer on the complaint investigation and response.

This bill requires the Maryland Department of Health to notify and consult with the local health department for the county in which a nursing home is located if the Department initiates an investigation of a nursing home complaint alleging actual harm.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on crossover bill HB#0945.

HB 945 - Nursing Homes - Complaints - Notification

Uploaded by: Sara Westrick

Position: FAV



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HB 945 - Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Facilities - Notification of Investigations and Establishment of the Health Care Quality Improvement Initiative
Senate Finance Committee
March 31, 2026
FAVORABLE

Good afternoon, Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of House Bill 945, which strengthens Maryland's system of oversight for nursing homes.

My name is Sara Westrick, Advocacy Director for AARP Maryland, and I am a member of the Oversight Committee on Quality of Care in Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Facilities.

AARP Maryland is one of the largest membership-based organizations in the state, with approximately 850,000 members. We represent the interests of Maryland's over 50 population, including families who rely on high-quality nursing home and assisted living care. AARP Maryland also has a long history of advocacy on long-term care issues.

Support for Enhanced Complaint Oversight and Coordination

AARP Maryland supported the original version of this bill and welcomes the enhanced bill, with amendments to establish the Health Care Quality Improvement Initiative and the task force. The Initiative appropriately focuses on improving the quality of care, affordability, and accessibility of services in nursing homes and assisted living programs, and determining how Maryland can better use and share available data and expertise to support analysis, monitoring, public transparency, and oversight.

The task force structure brings together key State leaders and agencies, including the Maryland Department of Health, the Office of Health Care Quality, the Maryland Health Care Commission, the Attorney General's Office, and the Maryland Patient Safety Center, among others. This cross-agency collaboration is essential to addressing systemic challenges in long-term services and supports.

AARP Maryland particularly values the bill's requirements for regular meetings, public updates, stakeholder engagement, and inclusion of feedback from frontline workers and family members. AARP Maryland looks forward to engaging with the Task Force and is eager to share our research, policy expertise, and the perspectives of older adults, residents, and caregivers to help inform recommendations and solutions that improve care quality and accountability across Maryland. For these reasons, we respectfully request that the Committee issue a favorable report.

If you have any questions, please contact Sara Westrick at swestrick@aarp.org or by calling 410-310-0374.

HB 945 - FIN - MACHO - LOSAA.docx (1).pdf

Uploaded by: State of Maryland

Position: FAV



**2026 SESSION
POSITION PAPER**

BILL: **HB 945 - Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Facilities – Notification of Investigations and Establishment of the Health Care Quality Improvement Initiative**

COMMITTEE: **Senate - Finance Committee**

POSITION: **Letter of Support As Amended**

BILL ANALYSIS: **HB 945 would require the Maryland Department of Health to notify the local health department in a county if an investigation is initiated against a nursing home in that county within a certain time frame and as permitted by federal law, and to the extent practicable, consult and coordinate with the local health department on the compliant investigation and response. The bill does not require a local health department to assist or assume nursing home oversight responsibilities of the Maryland Department of Health per federal or State law. It also establishes a Health Care Quality Improvement Initiative.**

POSITION RATIONALE: The Maryland Association of County Health Officers (MACHO) supports HB 945 as amended. The bill would require the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) to notify a local health department (LHD) of any investigations related to nursing home complaints in that LHD’s jurisdiction within twenty-four hours after initiating the investigation. This would ensure MDH is compliant with federal law regarding investigation notification but still allow LHDs to be notified of an action in their jurisdiction.

It would also require MDH, to the extent practicable and as permitted by federal law, to consult and coordinate with the local health department on the complaint investigation and response. MACHO agrees with the caveat in the bill that this consultation and coordination does not construe that a LHD will be required to assume nursing home federal or State oversight responsibilities of MDH.

LHDs and OHCQ each play an important role in supporting nursing home facilities in the state and ensuring the health and appropriate care of nursing home residents. LHDs work closely with nursing home facilities in their jurisdictions on communicable disease prevention, treatment, and outbreak management, as well as supporting these facilities with emergency preparedness and response. OHCQ is responsible for licensure and monitoring the quality of care at nursing facilities, as directed by both the state and federal governments. Local Health Officers can help OHCQ with linkages to other county agencies and entities as appropriate for OHCQ’s investigation. As amended, these roles are further strengthened.

MACHO respectfully submits this letter of support as amended for HB 945. For more information, please contact Ruth Maiorana, MACHO Executive Director at rmaiora1@jhu.edu or 410-937-1433. *This communication reflects the position of MACHO.*
