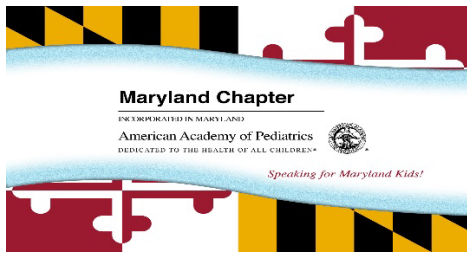


# **HB1434 - Senate\_FAV\_MDAAP\_MDH - Caregiver Resource**

Uploaded by: Christine Krone

Position: FAV



Senate Finance Committee

March 31, 2026

House Bill 1434 – *Maryland Department of Health – Caregiver Resource Webpage – Establishment*

**POSITION: SUPPORT**

The Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MDAAP) is a statewide association representing more than 1,100 pediatricians and allied pediatric and adolescent healthcare practitioners in the State and is a strong and established advocate promoting the health and safety of all the children we serve. On behalf of MDAAP, we submit this letter of **support** for House Bill 1434.

House Bill 1434 would require the Maryland Department of Health to develop and maintain a centralized caregiver resource webpage that provides plain language, easily accessible information, and links to services for caregivers across the State. This includes resources to support caregivers of children with disabilities and special health care needs, as well as those caring for adults and older individuals with chronic illness, behavioral health needs, or cognitive impairment.

Pediatricians work closely with families who are navigating complex medical, developmental, educational, and social service systems. Many caregivers struggle to identify available supports, leading to delays in care, increased stress, and avoidable health complications for children with special health care needs. A centralized, user friendly resource hub would help families access critical services more efficiently and improve care coordination across health and community settings.

This legislation represents a practical and cost-effective strategy to strengthen support for caregivers and resource accessibility for patients. Improving access to information can help reduce unnecessary emergency department visits, prevent caregiver burnout, and promote better health outcomes for children and adolescents with chronic conditions and disabilities.

For these reasons, MDAAP requests a favorable report on House Bill 1434.

**For more information call:**

Christine K. Krone  
J. Steven Wise  
Danna L. Kauffman  
Andrew G. Vetter  
410-244-7000

# House Bill 1434 - Senate .pdf

Uploaded by: Cody Stevens

Position: FAV

## **House Bill 1434**

Maryland Department of Health – Caregiver Resource Webpage – Establishment

Senate Finance Committee Hearing

Date: March 31, 2026

Position: SUPPORT

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Cody Stevens, and I am the President and CEO of The Anchor Initiative, Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting individuals with disabilities and their families across Maryland's Eastern Shore. I am also the father of a son with significant medical and developmental disabilities, and like many caregivers across our state, I have spent countless hours navigating complex systems just to locate the resources needed to support my child and my family.

House Bill 1434 would require the Maryland Department of Health to develop and maintain a centralized caregiver resource webpage that provides clear, plain-language information and links to services that support caregivers across Maryland.

The bill recognizes that caregivers must navigate multiple systems at once, including disability services, healthcare, education supports, aging services, and community resources. Today, these systems often operate in silos, with information fragmented across numerous agencies and websites. This fragmentation creates inefficiencies not only for families, but for the State itself.

It is important to clarify that while Maryland does have a number of websites and resources available, these are often specific to individual programs, agencies, or areas of caregiving. There is currently no single, centralized platform that brings together this information in a clear, coordinated, and accessible way for caregivers.

As a result, families are often required to navigate multiple disconnected systems, leading to duplication of effort, gaps in awareness, and missed opportunities to access existing supports. This lack of centralization contributes to inefficiencies not only for caregivers, but for the State's ability to ensure that services are fully utilized and aligned with intended outcomes.

When caregivers cannot quickly locate appropriate resources, it often leads to delayed care, underutilization of preventive services, and increased reliance on higher-cost interventions such as emergency care, institutional placement, or crisis services. In this way, barriers to information access can unintentionally drive up long-term costs within Maryland's healthcare and disability systems.

The proposed webpage would serve as a centralized, coordinated entry point, allowing caregivers to efficiently identify available programs, eligibility requirements, and support services. By improving navigation and access, the State can better ensure that existing services are utilized as intended, maximizing the return on current investments.

Through our work at The Anchor Initiative, Inc., we regularly assist families who are searching for help but do not know where to begin. What we consistently see is not a lack of resources, but a lack of clear, centralized access to those resources. Families often spend hours, sometimes days, searching across multiple platforms, duplicating efforts, and missing critical supports simply because the system is difficult to navigate.

House Bill 1434 offers a practical, cost-effective solution to this problem. By consolidating existing information into a single, accessible platform, Maryland can reduce inefficiencies, improve service coordination, and help families access the right supports earlier, before needs escalate into more complex and costly situations.

For caregivers balancing employment, family responsibilities, medical needs, and daily caregiving tasks, time is an incredibly limited resource. Streamlining access to information not only reduces stress but also allows caregivers to remain stable, productive, and engaged; factors that have broader economic benefits for communities and the State.

This legislation also recognizes that caregiving spans the entire lifespan, supporting families caring for children with disabilities, adults with chronic conditions, and older adults experiencing cognitive decline or other health challenges.

By improving coordination and accessibility of information, Maryland can strengthen system efficiency, reduce unnecessary costs, and better support caregivers and the individuals they serve.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on House Bill 1434.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Cody Stevens  
President & CEO  
The Anchor Initiative, Inc.  
Eastern Shore, Maryland  
Email: [Cody@anchorinitiative.org](mailto:Cody@anchorinitiative.org)  
Phone: (410)-829-4696

**CaregivingChart-12JAN26 (1).pdf**

Uploaded by: Dorinda Adams

Position: FAV

## AARP Maryland Caregiving Pilot

**Caregiving in My Community:**  
Maryland is one of four states (MD, NV, TX, WY) selected for a national pilot program

<b>Phase 1: Community Needs Assessment (Jul-Sep 2025)</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE:</b> Understand caregiver support gaps
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening sessions with caregivers &amp; partners</li> <li>• Review of Maryland-specific data</li> </ul>

<b>Phase 2: Mapping Process (2026)</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE:</b> Create a menu of programs, tools and resources	<b>Needs Assessment Findings (Nov 2025)</b>
	Enhance and expand local and state partnerships	
<b>Phase 3: Pilot Programs Partnerships (2026-2027)</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE:</b> Address the most critical community needs	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Test and refine innovative programs that address the most critical caregiving needs in our communities</li> </ul>	

**Strengthen caregiving support for AARP members and their families in communities nationwide**

**Note:** The AARP report, *Caregiving in the US 2025*, found that 24% of Maryland adults (1,164,000 residents) identify as family caregivers. Survey results are derived from this population.

# **HB 1434 Maryland Department of Health - Caregiver**

Uploaded by: Dorinda Adams

Position: FAV



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**HB 1434 - Maryland Department of Health - Caregiver Resource Webpage - Establishment**  
**Senate Finance Committee**  
**March 31, 2026**  
**FAVORABLE**

Good afternoon, Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and members of the committee. My name is Dorinda Adams, and I serve on the Executive Council of AARP Maryland, representing more than 850,000 older adults across the state. We bring the lived experiences and priorities of Marylanders age 50-plus to the policy table. We thank Delegate McCaskill for introducing this important legislation.

As Maryland's population ages, more residents are taking on caregiving responsibilities, with 1.16 million persons, or 24% of all adults in the state, currently doing so, according to AARP's latest research.<sup>1</sup> These caregivers provide essential physical, emotional, and social support, often at significant personal and financial cost.

**Maryland's Caregivers Need Streamlined, Accessible Information**

Caregivers often navigate a maze of programs, agencies, and services. HB 1434 offers a practical, high-impact solution by creating a single, easy-to-use online hub with:

- Plain-language information
- Links to state and local programs
- Safety and privacy resources
- Supports for caregiver health and wellbeing
- Tools to help families at every stage of their caregiving journey

This bill does not create new state service obligations, but it does ensure that families can actually find the supports that already exist.

**AARP Has Long Championed Caregiver Supports**

AARP has advocated for caregivers at the state and national levels for decades. We consistently hear from families that their biggest challenges are information overload, fragmented systems, and not knowing where to start. HB 1434 directly responds to those challenges. By creating a centralized, easy-to-navigate webpage, Maryland can reduce the bureaucratic burden on caregivers and help families connect to the resources they deserve.

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<sup>1</sup> [AARP Caregiving in the U.S.: Maryland Snapshot](#), published in October 2025, and uploaded as an appendix.

## **Caregiving in My Community**

Programs and policies that support family caregiving are essential. AARP has demonstrated this priority by establishing a national pilot *Caregiving in My Community* and Maryland is one of four states participating as the initial phase of the pilot began in the spring of 2025. The pilot has been designed to identify ways to enhance and expand existing resources within local and state governments and formal and informal organizations across the state. Maryland's participation is currently in the second phase of the three-phase pilot and is demonstrating that collaboration among public and private stakeholders could enhance and expand the support needed for our family/Informal Caregivers. A flowchart of Maryland's process is included as part of this written testimony to provide additional information.

## **The Bill Strengthens Coordination Across Agencies**

Caregiving doesn't occur in a silo, and neither should the support systems designed to help families. This coordinated approach will ensure caregivers can access comprehensive, consistent information.

This legislation is practical, low-cost, and high-impact. Creating an online, centralized resource is one of the most cost-effective ways to support caregivers. HB 1434 is thoughtful, family-centered legislation that strengthens the support system without imposing new mandates on agencies or providers.

We appreciate that HB 1434 requires MDH to coordinate with the Department of Education, the Department of Aging, the Developmental Disabilities Administration, and other relevant entities.

## **Conclusion**

For these reasons, AARP Maryland supports HB 1434. This bill will make a meaningful difference in the lives of caregivers across the state by making information more accessible, reducing stress, and helping families focus on what truly matters, caring for the people they love.

For additional follow-up, please contact Sara Westrick, AARP Maryland Advocacy Director at [swestrick@aarp.org](mailto:swestrick@aarp.org) or 410-310-0374.

**HB 1434 - X - FAV - FIN - ALZ Association.pdf**

Uploaded by: Megan Peters

Position: FAV



**Bill:** HB 1434 - Maryland Department of Health - Caregiver Resource Webpage - Establishment

**Committee:** Senate Finance Committee

**Position:** Favorable

**Date:** March 31, 2026

On behalf of the 127,200 Marylanders living with Alzheimer's disease and their 247,000 caregivers, the Alzheimer's Association supports *HB 1434 - Maryland Department of Health - Caregiver Resource Webpage - Establishment*. This bill will establish a centralized caregiver resource webpage with information and support. With Maryland's aging population rapidly growing, more Marylanders living with dementia, and the majority of dementia care provided by family caregivers, HB 1434 will make it easier for caregivers to find the guidance, programs, and services they need in one accessible place.

Currently, dementia caregivers must navigate various agency websites, nonprofit resources, and separate program portals to identify available supports. The bill's requirement to create a single, public-facing webpage containing resources related to aging, disability services, behavioral health, respite care, public benefits, safety, and supports for vulnerable adults and youth removes barriers that may delay or prevent caregivers from accessing essential help. Streamlining this information is especially important for dementia caregivers, who frequently juggle full-time responsibilities while managing complex, progressive care needs.

By establishing a centralized hub, HB 1434 will make Maryland's systems more navigable and responsive to the thousands of families caring for individuals with Alzheimer's or another dementia. For these reasons, the Alzheimer's Association respectfully urges a favorable report on HB 1434 so that Maryland's caregivers can receive the clear guidance, support, and connection they deserve. Please contact Megan Peters, Director of Government Affairs at [mrpeters@alz.org](mailto:mrpeters@alz.org) with any questions.

**HB 1434 - X - FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Megan Peters

Position: FAV



# *Maryland Senior Citizens Action Network*

## **MSCAN**

*AARP Maryland*

*Baltimore Jewish  
Council*

*Catholic Charities of  
Baltimore*

*Central Maryland  
Ecumenical Council*

*Church of the Brethren*

*Episcopal Diocese of  
Maryland*

*Housing Opportunities  
Commission of  
Montgomery County*

*Lutheran Office on  
Public Policy in  
Maryland*

*Maryland Association of  
Area Agencies on Aging*

*Maryland Catholic  
Conference*

*Mental Health  
Association of Maryland*

*Mid-Atlantic LifeSpan*

*National Association of  
Social Workers,  
Maryland Chapter*

*Presbytery of Baltimore*

*The Coordinating  
Center*

*MSCAN Co-Chairs:  
Carol Lienhard  
Megan Peters  
410-921-9005*

The Maryland Senior Citizens Action Network (MSCAN) is a statewide coalition of advocacy groups, service providers, faith-based and mission-driven organizations that support policies that meet the housing, health, and quality of care needs of Maryland's low and moderate-income seniors.

**MSCAN supports HB 1434.** This bill will establish a centralized caregiver resource webpage with information and support for caregivers across the state. With Maryland's aging population rapidly growing and much of long-term care delivered by family members, this bill fills a critical gap by making it easier for caregivers to find and access reliable, state-vetted information in one place.

Currently, caregivers must navigate a patchwork of agency websites, program portals, and nonprofit resources to find the information they need. The bill requires the creation of a centralized, public-facing webpage that includes resources related to aging, disability services, behavioral health, respite care, public benefits, safety, and youth and vulnerable adult supports. This is a critical step in ensuring that family caregivers have quick, accurate, and accessible information.

By establishing a single, reliable point of access for caregiver information, HB 1434 will make Maryland's systems more navigable and more responsive to the thousands of families who provide essential care every day. For these reasons, MSCAN respectfully urges a favorable report on HB 1434 so that Maryland's caregivers can receive the clear guidance, support, and connection they deserve. disability communities.

For these reasons, MSCAN respectfully urges a favorable report on HB 1434 so that Maryland's caregivers can receive the clear guidance, support, and connection they deserve.

**R A Lawson HB1434 Senate Written Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Reginald A. Lawson

Position: FAV

**Date: March 31, 2026 - Testimony HB 1434 Senate Finance Committee**

**Re: HB 1434 Senate Finance Committee - Caregiver Resource Webpage – Establishment  
Position: SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and Members of the Committee:

My name is **Reginald A. Lawson**. I write to express my support for **House Bill 1434**, which would establish a centralized caregiver resource webpage to help stakeholders easily access services, supports, and guidance available across Maryland.

My caregiving journey began in a doctor's office with a diagnosis of my mother having dementia, and I said “oh, that’s what you call her behavior.” In a moment of confidence and ignorance, I said to the doctor “tell me what medicines she needs, call the pharmacy and I'll pick them up.” She gave one of those ‘you poor soul’ smiles, and said “there is no such medicine, and she was requesting immediate suspension of my mother’s driving privileges, and she had very little advice beyond that.”

In that moment I knew that I didn't understand the word, but I had to do what was right for my mother! My research provided clinical and anecdotal references which were inadequate for my needs. This led to deepening fears and frustration. I was, as a new caregiver, constantly bombarded with doubt (self and others), frustration from dealing with uncaring or undereducated health, social and financial services people, and worst of all, accusations of selfishness (from family). None of us knew what we were dealing with!

I quickly accepted I needed an understanding of what, when, who and how to function at the ground zero Caregiver’s level, not some clinical level.

**House Bill 1434** recognizes that caregivers are often responsible for navigating multiple and complex systems at every stage of the disabilities’ lifespan. A centralized, accessible and up-to-date caregiver webpage would provide all Maryland stakeholders with relevant knowledge and resources. This webpage will enhance their efficiency, effectiveness and sanity to do their best to render support.

I reflect, to this day, that I may have failed my mother because I was not better informed. For these reasons, I humbly urge the Committee to issue a **favorable report on House Bill 1434**.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Reginald A. Lawson  
reginaldalawson@gmail.com

**Lailas Gift HB1434\_March 31 2026.pdf**

Uploaded by: Shari Bailey

Position: FAV



**LAILA'S GIFT**  
*Celebrating One Gift at a Time*

Shari Bailey  
CEO & Founder, Laila's Gift  
1040 Hardees Drive  
Suite F  
Aberdeen, MD 21001  
info@lailasgift.org  
443-509-4515

Date: March 31, 2026

Senate Finance Committee

Re: HB1434 – Maryland Department of Health – Caregiver Resource Webpage – Establishment

Position: **SUPPORT**

My name is Shari Bailey, Founder of Laila's Gift, a Maryland nonprofit dedicated to supporting families of individuals with non-apparent disabilities and advancing policies that improve safety and quality of life. I am also the mother and caregiver of my daughter, Laila, who is nonverbal, lives with autism, and has a rare genetic syndrome.

I am here to express my strong support for House Bill 1434 and to provide clarity on both the need for this legislation and the important definition of a family caregiver.

A family caregiver is not defined by age or diagnosis. A caregiver may be a parent supporting a child with complex needs, a spouse caring for a partner, or an adult child supporting an aging loved one. Caregiving spans the entire lifespan, and regardless of where someone falls on that journey, families face a common challenge: navigating a fragmented and overwhelming system of resources.

There has been some misunderstanding that a centralized caregiver resource already exists. While many valuable websites are available across different agencies, there is currently no single, unified, caregiver-centered entry point that connects resources across the lifespan. As a result, families are still left to navigate multiple systems on their own, a process that can take months. In some cases, I have spoken with families who have spent years, even up to three, searching for the right information without success.

This is not feasible because time is not a luxury most caregivers have. When families are forced to spend months or even years searching for the right information, it delays access to critical supports, services, and safety planning that can directly impact a loved one's well-being. In situations like elopement risk, those delays can have life-threatening consequences.

It also places an unnecessary emotional and mental burden on caregivers who are already managing complex, demanding responsibilities. Instead of focusing on care, they are forced to become navigators of fragmented systems, often without clear guidance.



Beyond the personal impact, this inefficiency leads to missed opportunities for early intervention, increased strain on emergency services, and higher long-term costs for the state. When caregivers cannot easily find the right resources, small challenges can escalate into crises that could have been prevented with timely support.

Ultimately, a system that is difficult to navigate is a system that fails the very people it is meant to serve.

For caregivers, this is not just inconvenient, it is overwhelming.

When my daughter Laila was identified as being at risk of elopement, I was faced with urgent and frightening questions. Where do I find guidance on safety planning? What resources are available to prevent elopement? How do I prepare for an emergency? Some of the information I needed existed, but it was scattered across agencies, difficult to locate, and not organized in a way that supported caregivers in real time. In other cases, critical safety planning information for elopement emergencies (which is a public safety issue in our state) did not exist.

This bill addresses that gap.

A centralized, caregiver-focused webpage would serve as a true gateway, bringing together critical information in one place, including safety planning tools, emergency preparedness guidance, respite care options, disability services, and aging resources. It would not replace existing systems, but instead connect them in a way that is intuitive, accessible, and built around the real-life needs of caregivers.

According to AARP Maryland, more than 1.2 million Marylanders are serving as family caregivers. For these families, simplifying access to information is not a luxury, it is a necessity.

Through my work with Laila's Gift, I hear from caregivers across Maryland every day who are struggling to find the right resources at the right time. The need for a coordinated, easy-to-navigate entry point is one of the most consistent challenges families face.

House Bill 1434 is a practical, compassionate solution that acknowledges caregiving as a lifespan issue and strengthens how our state supports families.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to **issue a favorable report on House Bill 1434.**

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Warm regards,



Shari Bailey  
Founder, CEO, Caregiver  
Laila's Gift

## **HB1434\_MDH\_LOC**

Uploaded by: Madalyn Farrar, MPH

Position: INFO



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, Maryland 21401

**Re: House Bill 1434 – Maryland Department of Health - Caregiver Resource Webpage - Establishment- Letter of Concern**

Dear Chair Beidle and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (the Department) respectfully submits this letter of concern regarding House Bill (HB) 1434 - Maryland Department of Health - Caregiver Resource Webpage - Establishment. HB 1434 requires the Department to develop and maintain a caregiver resource webpage with information and resources to support certain caregivers in the State.

The Department notes that numerous existing resources to support family caregivers exist across Agencies, including the Department of Aging (MDOA), Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD), and the Department of Human Services (DHS). The Department is concerned that the requirements in HB 1434 would be duplicative of these existing and extensive resources, and further create confusion about the best place for caregivers to find information. For example:

- [Maryland Access Point \(MAP\)](#)<sup>1</sup> is a statewide website that includes considerable caregiver services, such as subsidies, training, and support, and is regularly updated with new resources provided by service partners. MAP is searchable by county, topic, age, and a variety of other individual factors to help people locate resources in the right region of the state.
  - This website is valuable to family caregivers because of the variety of included resources outside of the traditional “caregiver services”, including transportation, housing, financial assistance, health care, equipment and technology, food and nutrition assistance, programming, support groups and supportive services.
  - MAP was recently used as a backbone of the [Johns Hopkins Memory Care Family Checklist](#).<sup>2</sup> The Checklist generates a personalized report with tailored resource recommendations based on caregivers’ responses to a series of questions about themselves and their loved one. The resources in this report are drawn from MAP.

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<sup>1</sup> Maryland Access Point (MAP). <https://search.marylandaccesspoint.211md.org/>

<sup>2</sup> Maryland Department of Aging. Memory Care Checklist. <https://aging.maryland.gov/Pages/MemoryCareChecklist.aspx>.

- [MDOA Caregiver and Dementia Support](#)<sup>3</sup> works in conjunction with a host of State and community-based services to create a coordinated array of supports for individuals who need them.
- [Maryland 211](#)<sup>4</sup> is a comprehensive, statewide database and referral system that is also cross-linked to MAP resources. 211 enables family caregivers to search for a variety of resources for services at every stage of life.
- [MDOD Caregiver Supports and Services](#)<sup>5</sup> offers caregiver support and services with additional information.

Further, the [Maryland Commission on Caregiving](#) within DHS is an established entity that is charged with “identifying the needs and challenges faced by informal family caregivers caring for those across the lifespan.”<sup>6</sup> Some of the Commission’s legislative mandates include developing and distributing a handbook of current respite care and other family caregiver services available in the State and coordinating activities of existing and proposed family caregiver support services, among others.<sup>7</sup>

Given that many existing Agencies and their resources are already available, as described above, the Department is concerned that creating another caregiver webpage would only add confusion about where caregivers should go for information and support.

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

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<sup>3</sup> Maryland Department of Aging. Caregiver and Dementia Support. <https://aging.maryland.gov/national-family-caregiver-support.aspx>

<sup>4</sup> 211 Maryland. <https://211md.org/>

<sup>5</sup> Maryland Department of Disabilities. Community Living. <https://mdod.maryland.gov/community/Pages/prog-for-caregivers.aspx>

<sup>6</sup> Maryland Department of Human Services. The Maryland Commission on Caregiving. <https://dhs.maryland.gov/maryland-commission-caregiving/>

<sup>7</sup> Senate Bill 216, Chapter 67 of the Acts of 2017. [https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2017RS/Chapters\\_noln/CH\\_67\\_sb0216t.pdf](https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2017RS/Chapters_noln/CH_67_sb0216t.pdf).