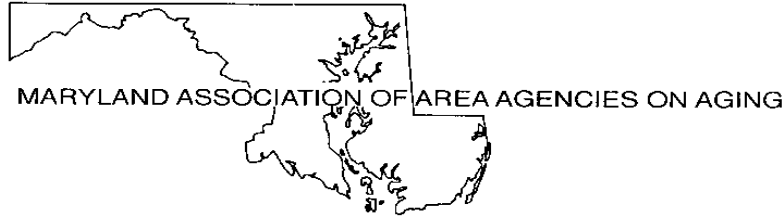


**M 4 A**



*Karen Winkowski  
President  
Representing Harford County  
Office on Aging*

*Erin Bird, Vice President  
Representing Cecil County  
Department of Community Services*

*Ofelia Ross Ott, Treasurer  
Representing Howard County  
Office on Aging and Independence*

*Heang Tan, Secretary  
Representing Baltimore County  
Department of Aging*

BILL NO: House Bill 1002  
TITLE: Nursing Facilities – Involuntary Discharge or Transfer  
COMMITTEE: Health  
POSITION: **SUPPORT**  
DATE: February 25, 2026

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Maryland Association of Area Agencies on Aging (M4A), we respectfully submit this letter in support of House Bill 1002, legislation that strengthens protections for nursing facility residents facing involuntary discharge or transfer.

Unplanned or inappropriate involuntary discharges can have devastating consequences for residents, particularly those with complex medical, behavioral health, or housing needs. House Bill 1002 provides meaningful and necessary safeguards to ensure that residents are not discharged to unsafe or unsuitable settings, such as temporary housing, and that receiving facilities have confirmed their ability to accept and care for the resident prior to transfer.

The bill also strengthens notice requirements, improves transparency, and reinforces discharge planning standards by requiring facilities to identify a confirmed post-discharge location and develop a safe, secure, and sustainable plan of care. These provisions align with best practices in person-centered care and support continuity, stability, and resident choice.

Importantly, this legislation reinforces the role of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program and ensures residents receive timely and comprehensive information about their rights and available advocacy resources at a critical and often vulnerable point in their care. This clarity and accountability benefit not only residents and families, but also providers and the State by reducing preventable crises, hospitalizations, and homelessness among older adults.

As Maryland's population continues to age, policies that promote thoughtful discharge planning and protect residents from unsafe transitions are essential to supporting successful aging and responsible long-

term care oversight. House Bill 1002 advances these goals and reflects Maryland's commitment to resident-centered care.

For these reasons, the Maryland Association of Area Agencies on Aging strongly supports House Bill 1002 and respectfully urges the Committee to issue a favorable report.

**Who is M4A?**

*The nineteen member organizations of Maryland's Association of Area Agencies on Aging (M4A) serve Maryland's older and citizens with disabilities, providing a range of cost-effective state, federal, and locally funded programs that help individuals remain secure in the community with dignity, independence, and choice as they age. M4A and its associated Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) represent the "front line" in Maryland's challenge to meet the complex and varied needs of well over one million older adults statewide. M4A's goal is to ensure coordination and communication with all partners on all aspects of senior service planning, thereby enhancing opportunities and availability to all eligible citizens.*