



## COMMISSION ON AGING

### **Testimony on HB1423: Position – Favorable Maryland Department of Health - Workgroup on Home- and Community-Based Services**

**TO:** Chair Bagnall, Vice Chair Cullison, and members of the Health Committee  
**FROM:** Linda Bergofsky and Wayne Berman, Co-Chairs, Montgomery County Commission on Aging

We are writing on behalf of the Montgomery County Commission on Aging (CoA) in support of **HB1423—Maryland Department of Health - Workgroup on Home-and Community-Based Services**. The CoA was established by Montgomery County in 1974 pursuant to a requirement of the Federal Older Americans Act of 1965, that there be an Advisory Council to the Area Agency on Aging. In that role, the CoA serves as an advocate for the health, safety, and well-being of the County's older residents at the local, State, and National levels. HB1423 supports a topic of interest to the Commission and our constituents, specifically promoting programs and services that allow older people to age in their communities. To that end, this bill will create a workgroup, comprised of a broad representation of government, consumer, and industry representatives, that will undertake a holistic and comprehensive assessment of the home-and-community based (HCBS) programs currently funded under Medicaid waivers in Maryland.

In the 2025 Joint Chairmen's Report, the Maryland Department of Health noted that the number of people on Registries (effectively waiting lists) for several waiver programs continues to grow at a rapid rate, despite efforts in the Office of Long-term Services and Supports to improve the workflows associated with eligibility determination and enrollment. The increase is not surprising given the increasing number of people needing services. However, even within waiver programs for which no Registry exists, the time between application and enrollment can take many months. We have received anecdotal reports from consumers and local Eligibility Determination staff that waiver applications to the State are lost, misplaced, or rejected despite having met all the timelines and containing all the required information.

The Workgroup established under HB1423 would review and evaluate all elements of the Waiver programs and make recommendations in its report to the Governor, as well as to the House Health Committee and the Senate Finance Committee. The CoA anticipates that the Workgroup will offer innovative suggestions for improving how HCBS waiver programs are managed.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge a FAVORABLE report on HB1423.

**Department of Health and Human Services**

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