



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*

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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 944, legislation that strengthens Maryland's ability to monitor and respond to rapidly increasing health care acquisitions across hospitals, physician practices, specialty providers, and long-term care settings. As these transactions grow in scale and complexity, they raise serious concerns about affordability, access, quality, and patient safety.

Maryland has an oversight framework for nursing home acquisitions through the Maryland Health Care Commission (MHCC). But nursing homes were only the first wave of private equity expansion in health care. The same troubling patterns - reduced staffing, increased mortality, higher hospitalization and emergency department use, and financial extraction that undermines care - are now emerging in additional care settings.

A growing body of evidence shows that health care consolidation, particularly through private equity acquisitions of provider organizations and facilities, leads to higher health care costs, reduced staffing, and lower quality. We cannot risk these trends reaching the rest of our health care system.

HB 944 provides a measured, reasonable, and necessary response. The bill is not intended to halt or impede all transactions. Rather, it creates a process to identify and address the subset of deals most likely to threaten the public interest. HB 944 extends MHCC's existing expertise to other health care facilities and medical group practices. It does so by requiring health care entities to provide notice of material change transactions and authorizing MHCC to conduct a public interest review when transactions may affect cost, access, equity, staffing, or the types of services delivered.

Too many Marylanders, especially seniors, have experienced the consequences of poorly overseen acquisitions: sudden changes in providers, reduced staffing, narrowing service options, and higher costs. HB 944 ensures that as the health care marketplace continues to evolve, Marylanders have the protections they need. For these reasons, MSCAN respectfully urges a favorable report on HB 944.