



**Testimony before the House Health Committee
February 25, 2026**

House Bill 965 - Office of Health Care Quality Stakeholder Advisory Council - Establishment

SUPPORT with AMENDMENTS

On behalf of the National Association of Social Workers, Maryland Chapter (NASW-MD) Committee on Aging, we would like to express our support with proposed amendments for House Bill 965 Office of Health Care Quality Stakeholder Advisory Council – Establishment.

We are social workers who have devoted our careers to working with older adults. We have seen the hardship and suffering many of them experience when they receive poor quality care in a hospital, assisted living facility or nursing home. We have supported the victims and their families as they have made reports to OHCQ, but they often never hear about follow-up from the agency. That’s why we wholeheartedly support the establishment of the OHCQ Stakeholder Advisory Council.

According to its website, the Office of Health Care Quality (OHCQ) monitors “the quality of care in Maryland’s health care facilities and community-based programs. As of July 1, 2025, OHCQ oversees 23,095 providers in 47 industries.” This is a huge task, the results of which impact millions of Marylanders. Therefore, it is essential that its work should be overseen by a robust, well-qualified panel of experts and other stakeholders. We feel this bill meets that requirement.

Because we are aware of the pervasive quality problems in assisted living facilities, we would like to propose the addition of data collection related to assisted living facilities and their residents.

Amendment No. 1, on page 4, starting in line 19:

(H) (1) AT EACH PUBLIC MEETING OF THE ADVISORY COUNCIL, THE OFFICE SHALL REPORT DATA FROM THE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING 6–MONTH PERIOD REGARDING:

(I) THE NUMBER OF:

1. HOSPITALS ACTIVELY MONITORED;
2. NURSING HOMES INSPECTED;
3. ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES INSPECTED;
- ~~3.~~ 4. COMPLAINTS RECEIVED FROM HOSPITAL PATIENTS AND LONG–TERM CARE AND ASSISTED LIVING FACILITY RESIDENTS; AND
4. CODE VIOLATIONS IDENTIFIED IN EACH FACILITY;

(over)



Marylanders deserve the high possible quality health care services. That is why we urge you to support House Bill 965 with the included amendments.

Respectfully,

Karessa Proctor, BSW, MSW
Executive Director, NASW-MD