

Date: March 6, 2026

House Health Committee

Re: **HB1434 Maryland Department of Health - Caregiver Resource Webpage - Establishment**

Position: SUPPORT

Dear Madam Chair Bagnall, Vice Chair Cullison, and Members of the Committee:

My name is **Reginald A. Lawson**. I am writing to express my support for **House Bill 1434**, which would establish a centralized caregiver resource webpage to help families 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 condition." 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 offered no literature.

In that moment I knew that I didn't understand the word, but I had the dedication to do what was right for my mother and the Internet! The research provided clinical and anecdotal references which were inadequate, leading 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 social and financial services people and worst of all, accusations of selfishness (from family).

I became angry during a hospital visit when they said they could not talk to me about her medical needs. I was floored when the bank told me they did not recognize (honor) my POA Financial letter representing her financial management needs. I was gravely concerned during our visit to The Social Security Administration, to file for spousal benefits from her deceased husband, and told I could not speak during her interview and the hearing officer threaten to put me out if I did.

I did not know - what I did not know, but I quickly accepted I needed more than dedication, I needed an understanding of what, when, who and how to function at the ground zero level. I reflect, to this day, that I may have failed her because I was not better informed.

A centralized, clear and up-to-date caregiver webpage as a singular, comprehensive source addressing the multitude of needed knowledge and resources enhances the caregivers' ability to render effective care. **House Bill 1434** will help all Maryland stakeholders to perform from a shared understanding of the challenges, approaches and options.

House Bill 1434 recognizes that caregivers are often responsible for navigating multiple complex systems at once — including health care, disability services, aging services, education, and community resources. Caregiving needs span the entire lifespan — from childhood

disabilities to adult developmental disabilities to aging-related conditions such as dementia. A centralized resource can help families at every stage of life.

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

Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Reginald A. Lawson".

Reginald A. Lawson
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