



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 1117. This legislation ensures access to approved elopement response devices through both Maryland Medicaid and private insurance plans, providing essential protections for older Marylanders who are at risk of wandering and for the caregivers and service providers who support them.

Wandering is one of the most dangerous and common dementia-related behaviors. **Six in ten people living with dementia will wander at least once**, often becoming lost or confused even in familiar settings, and this risk exists **at every stage of the disease**. Wandering places enormous emotional and logistical strain on family caregivers, long-term care providers, adult day programs, and first responders. HB 1117 addresses this safety challenge by ensuring that devices designed to prevent or respond to elopement are treated as medically necessary and are accessible to Marylanders.

There are well-documented warning signs that signal an increased risk for wandering, including returning home later than usual, forgetting familiar routes, restlessness, or becoming disoriented in crowded or unfamiliar environments. In many cases, caregivers and aging-services professionals rely on a combination of structured routines, environmental modifications, and technology to maintain safety. However, without coverage, families often cannot afford essential monitoring devices that complement these strategies. HB 1117 removes this financial barrier by requiring both Medicaid and private insurers to cover approved elopement response devices, ensuring that safety depends on need—not on a household's ability to pay.

By requiring consistent coverage across payers, HB 1117 aligns Maryland's policies with evidence-based safety practices and addresses a widespread, predictable need among older adults and individuals living with cognitive impairment. Access to approved technologies will save lives, reduce emergency responses, and alleviate pressure on caregivers, long-term care facilities, aging service providers, and local jurisdictions. For these reasons, MSCAN urges a favorable report on HB 1117.