



*Susan O'Neill, Chair*

*Charlotte Davis, Executive Director*

Testimony in Support of  
House Bill 811 - Aging-in-Place Programs - Grants - Multigenerational Third Places (The Village  
Multigenerational Third Places Act)  
Health Committee  
February 26, 2026

The Rural Maryland Council supports House Bill 811 - Aging-in-Place Programs - Grants - Multigenerational Third Places (The Village Multigenerational Third Places Act). House Bill 811 authorizes the Maryland Department of Aging to provide grants to nonprofit organizations and Area Agencies on Aging to strengthen aging-in-place programs and support social engagement through multigenerational third places. By expanding allowable uses of existing grant authority, the bill enables community-based organizations to create or enhance welcoming spaces where residents of all ages can gather, connect, and support one another. This legislation provides a thoughtful framework for strengthening community ties while helping older adults remain in their homes and neighborhoods.

Promoting aging in place requires more than housing and health support, it also requires meaningful social connection. Research consistently shows that prolonged isolation among older adults is associated with poorer physical health, increased rates of depression and anxiety, cognitive decline, and higher health care costs. By supporting opportunities for intergenerational interaction and community participation, HB 811 addresses these challenges proactively. Investing in social infrastructure today can reduce more intensive and costly interventions in the future.

This proposal is particularly meaningful for rural communities across Maryland. Geographic distance, limited transportation options, and fewer centralized gathering spaces can intensify isolation for older residents. Rural communities often rely on trusted local institutions, such as senior centers, libraries, faith-based organizations, and small nonprofits, to serve as hubs of connection. However, these organizations frequently operate with constrained budgets and limited staff capacity. Grant support through the Maryland General Assembly's authorization would help sustain and expand the kinds of multigenerational gathering spaces that are essential in rural areas.

House Bill 811 takes a practical and community-driven approach. By encouraging collaboration across generations and strengthening neighborhood-based support, the bill reinforces Maryland's commitment to helping residents age with dignity, independence, and connection.

For these reasons, the Rural Maryland Council respectfully requests your favorable support of House Bill 811.