



**Testimony of American Association of University Women of Maryland**

**to the**

**Maryland General Assembly  
House of Delegates Health Committee**

**in support of**

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

February 23, 2026

Submitted by Roxann King, Public Policy, AAUW Maryland; President, AAUW Anne Arundel County  
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The American Association of University Women of Maryland (AAUW Maryland) strongly supports 2026 HB 965. Founded in 1881, AAUW's approximately 150,000 members and supporters are leaders in gender equity research, advocacy, and education. In Maryland, our members and supporters, and college and university partners are strong advocates for laws that promote the education, equity, and the well-being of women and families.

Most AAUW members are eligible to be members of AARP. We are naturally concerned about the future of Maryland seniors in residences, nursing homes, and hospitals. Are they safe?

I have good reason to question this. I have first-hand experience as a caretaker for three years for my mother. This was not yesterday, but I need the assurance that it will not happen to me. I found a reputable, award-winning, long-term care facility for my mother when she moved to be near me. I did not know how to care for her because of mobility issues. I moved Mom here from Florida in an RV over Thanksgiving weekend in 2007. Between Christmas and New Year's Day she had a stroke while sitting on the toilet. A former Navy head nurse, who drank 8 glasses of water a day religiously throughout her life, she was denied water and denied use of the toilet when needed in the care center. Instead, when she and others cried to use the toilet, they were put in the chapel. I arrived many times to find her there crying and asking to go to the toilet. My brother, an Orthopedic Oncologist, agreed that the severe constipation could easily have caused the stroke. I arrived that day to find her eating dinner and talking with people at the table and was told she had a stroke while sitting on the toilet. I made a big mistake that day: I decided to take her to AAMC to the emergency room for a checkup. We waited and talked for about 5 hours in an emergency room for a bed. When she was taken up to a room, I was not allowed to accompany her. She had dementia and was very frightened. When I finally was allowed to join her, she was tied to the bed. She was not allowed to eat due to not having been given a swallow test. She deteriorated fast and her nurses left for New Years. I signed her out and had her delivered by ambulance to the care facility. She was in bed for a month and did not speak again, except one sentence a year later. I took her home when she got MRSA at the assisted living facility and I was told not to tell anyone. The doctor seeing the clients there told me himself that he had no training in gerontology. Also, he prescribed an antidepressant to my

mother and many of the patients that had a clear warning online that it could prove fatal to senior dementia patients.

You need to approve this Stakeholder Advisor Council. Maryland's government can't do it all by itself. It needs us to help inform on what is happening. We need a voice in our health care. HB 965 creates a Stakeholder Advisory Council for Office of Health Care Quality (OHCQ) including frontline hospital workers, doctors, nursing home care workers, residents, family members and patient advocates. OHCQ needs to return to its vital function of providing active oversight of our health care facilities to improve the declining quality of health care in Maryland

**AAUW MD urges that you provide a favorable report on House Bill 965, Office of Health Care Quality Stakeholder Advisory Council-Establishment.**