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**HB 1291 - Public Health - Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Continuity of Care
House Health Committee
March 3, 2026
FAVORABLE**

Chair Bagnall, Vice Chair Cullison, and members of the House Health Committee,

My name is Sara Westrick, and I am the Advocacy Director for AARP Maryland, one of the largest membership-based organizations in the state, with approximately 850,000 members. We bring the voices of older Marylanders and their families to the policymaking table.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of House Bill 1291, which seeks to ensure continuity of care for older Marylanders receiving in-home services under the Medicaid program.

Why HB 1291 Is Needed

Every year, seniors across Maryland experience unexpected and unnecessary lapses in in-home services due to administrative or technical errors within the eligibility or renewal process. For older Marylanders who rely on personal care aides, home-health supports, or other in-home Medicaid services, even a single missed day can create serious problems. These disruptions place seniors in harm's way, and they create avoidable costs for the state's health care system.

Continuity of care is a matter of dignity and safety. For Marylanders aging at home, their care workers are more than just service providers; they are the people who help them bathe, dress, eat, manage their medications, and remain connected to the community. Losing these services without warning can put someone at immediate risk. HB 1291 recognizes that no older adult should lose crucial in-home support because of a paperwork error or other glitch.

What HB 1291 Does

HB 1291 creates a cost-effective solution by requiring the Maryland Department of Health to establish procedures that temporarily continue previously approved in-home services when an interruption is caused by an administrative or technical error. The bill also allows services to continue for up to 52 consecutive days or 1,248 service hours, which should be long enough to resolve the issue. During this time period, the Department may not bill the recipient for any services provided during the temporary continuation period. The bill applies only to persons aged 65 and older who have recently received services and are actively resolving the administrative issue, and it is not an expansion of eligibility.



Conclusion

HB 1291 gives the Department a structured process that reduces confusion and frustration for staff, case managers, providers, and families. The bill helps protect vulnerable residents and ensures that critical support services are not disrupted due to administrative errors. AARP Maryland, therefore, urges a favorable report on House Bill 1291.

If you have any questions, please contact Sara Westrick, AARP Maryland Advocacy Director, at swestrick@aarp.org or by calling 410-310-0374.