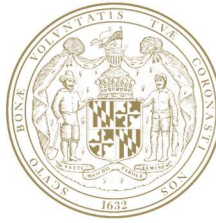


JEFFERSON L. GHRIST  
Co-CHAIR

NATALIE ZIEGLER  
Co-CHAIR



H. KEVIN ANDERSON  
TERRY BAKER  
KEVIN B. HORNBERGER  
ANDRE V. JOHNSON, JR.  
STEVE JOHNSON  
SHEREE SAMPLE-HUGHES

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
HOUSE RURAL CAUCUS

March 5, 2026

The Honorable Heather Bagnall  
Chair, Health Committee  
241 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Chair Bagnall, Vice Chair Cullison, and Honorable Members of the Health Committee:

On behalf of the Rural Caucus, we are writing to express our support for **HB202 Public Health – Social Isolation and Loneliness Pilot Grant Program – Establishment.**

This bill would establish the Social Isolation and Loneliness Pilot Grant Program. The program would provide grants to examine the impact of social isolation and loneliness on vulnerable populations, encouraging programming to address the negative mental and physical health effects caused by loneliness, inform future policies and programming, and direct these programs to support the populations most vulnerable. This bill prioritizes funding for rural communities, which are particularly vulnerable to social isolation and loneliness.

For these reasons, the Rural Caucus supports HB202 and requests a favorable report.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jefferson L. Ghrist".

Delegate Jefferson L. Ghrist  
*Co-Chair*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Natalie Ziegler".

Delegate Natalie Ziegler  
*Co-Chair*