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HB 596 - Estates – Maryland Uniform Simultaneous Death Act
House Judiciary Committee
February 11, 2026
FAVORABLE

Good afternoon, Chair Bartlett, Vice Chair Davis, and members of the House Judiciary Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 596, the Maryland Uniform Simultaneous Death Act. AARP Maryland thanks Delegates Nkongolo, Behler, Chisholm, Griffith, and Odom for sponsoring this important legislation.

AARP Maryland is one of the largest membership-based organizations in the state, encompassing almost 850,000 members. One of our policy positions is to advocate for simplified laws and probate policies, and that is what HB 596 does.

This bill is a much-needed modernization of our state's laws governing simultaneous deaths, and it clarifies the procedure for determining how to distribute property in cases where individuals die simultaneously or in close succession. Specifically, the bill provides that an individual who does not survive another individual by at least 120 hours is deemed to have predeceased the other individual.

This simplification is beneficial for families and individuals, as well as payors and third parties who are often caught in the middle of resolving these issues. Furthermore, HB 596 modernizes our state's laws to align with the Uniform Simultaneous Death Act, the current version of which has been adopted by 21 other states and the District of Columbia. This uniformity is essential for ensuring consistency and predictability in the application of the law, particularly in cases involving multiple jurisdictions.

In conclusion, AARP Maryland strongly supports HB 596 because it simplifies the procedure for determining the order of death, modernizes our state's laws, and provides important protections for families and individuals. As such, AARP Maryland respectfully urges a **favorable report** on HB 596.

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

