



Maryland Senior Citizens Action Network

MSCAN

AARP Maryland

*Alzheimer's
Association,
Maryland Chapters*

*Baltimore Jewish
Council*

Catholic Charities

*Central Maryland
Ecumenical Council*

Church of the Brethren

*Episcopal Diocese of
Maryland*

*Housing Opportunities
Commission of
Montgomery County*

*Jewish Community
Relations Council of
Greater Washington*

*Lutheran Office on
Public Policy in
Maryland*

*Maryland Association of
Area Agencies on Aging*

*Maryland Catholic
Conference*

*Mental Health
Association of Maryland*

Mid-Atlantic LifeSpan

*National Association of
Social Workers,
Maryland Chapter*

Presbytery of Baltimore

*The Coordinating
Center*

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Testimony in Support of SB966 - Health Facilities - Assisted Living Programs - Referrals and Licenses **Finance Committee** **March 5, 2020**

The Maryland Senior Citizens Action Network (MSCAN) is a statewide coalition of advocacy groups, service providers, faith-based and mission-driven organizations that supports policies that meet the housing and care needs of Maryland's low and moderate-income seniors.

MSCAN enthusiastically supports SB 966 for its potential to positively impact the lives of low-income seniors who deserve quality licensed assisted living facilities. SB966 would make it a civil offense for a person to knowingly or willfully refer a client to an unlicensed assisted living facility. It would ensure more transparency from referral agencies by requiring them to register with the state and disclose financial relationships they have with assisted living facilities. It would also give the Attorney General the authority to shut down unlicensed assisted living facilities in certain cases and investigate referral agency violations.

MSCAN strongly urges support for SB966. There are far too many referral agencies who knowingly refer clients to unlicensed assisted living facilities, regularly receiving undisclosed kickbacks or other financial incentives for the referral. Their clients most often do not know that they are being placed in an unlicensed facility. Older adults do not always realize their facility is unlicensed until after they have received improper and often dangerous treatment and then reach out to OHCQ, their local area on aging and/or an elder abuse prevention organization. However, getting out of the facility is not always easy and having the facility shutdown or fined is even more difficult under current law. SB966 would set clear rules for how referral agencies can operate, give OHCQ and the Attorney General more power to go after unlicensed facilities and unscrupulous referral agencies, and ultimately make seniors safer.

MSCAN respectfully requests a favorable report on SB 966. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.