



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB564 House Appropriations Committee

February 25, 2020

Submitted by Stacey Jefferson and Margo Quinlan, Co-Chairs

Member Agencies:

Advocates for Children and Youth
Baltimore Jewish Council
Behavioral Health System Baltimore
CASH Campaign of Maryland
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Marylanders Against Poverty

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Marylander Against Poverty (MAP) appreciates the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of HB 564, which would increase the Assisted Living Group Home Subsidy from \$650 to \$1000 a month for eligible low-income seniors.

The number of older adults has been constantly rising in Maryland: between 2015 and 2030, Maryland's older adult population is anticipated to increase from 1.2 million to 1.7 million, a 40% increase.¹ The Senior population is also the fastest growing homeless population. In order to support older adults, the programs of the Department of Aging are critically important.

HB 564 provides a clear mechanism for helping low income older adults. The subsidy has not been increased in nearly 20 years, while the cost of licensed assisted living has gone up astronomically, making it unaffordable to much of the low- and moderate-income senior population.

In the fall of 2019 MAP requested that the Department of Aging increase the subsidy for the FY21 budget. While it was not increased in the budget, the Secretary did send a response (attached) in which stated, "At the very least, any regulation should allow for inflationary factors that were not included in the existing regulations." Based on this response, HB564 includes an automatic increase assessment based on the consumer price index.

For these reasons Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) supports HB564, which increases the Assisted Living Group Home Subsidy from \$650 a month to \$1000 a month.

Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) is a coalition of service providers, faith communities, and advocacy organizations advancing statewide public policies and programs necessary to alleviate the burdens faced by Marylanders living in or near

¹ Maryland Department of Aging. 2016. State Plan on Aging.

https://aging.maryland.gov/Documents/MDStatePlan2017_2020Dated092216.pdf