



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

BILL: Senate Bill 642 - Home - and Community-Based Waiver Services - Alterations and Task Force

SPONSOR: Senators Kelley, Hayes, Lee, and West

HEARING DATE: March 3, 2020

COMMITTEE: Finance

CONTACT: Intergovernmental Affairs Office, 301-780-8411

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 642 - Home - and Community-Based Waiver Services - Alterations and Task Force**, which defines "community-based long-term services and supports" as long-term services and supports that serve individuals in the individuals' homes and communities and not in an institution. It changes the required contents of waivers submitted by the Maryland Department of Health to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The Department must send monthly letters to eligible individuals or those likely to be eligible for waiver participation. Enough letters must be sent to allow for at least 7,500 individuals to participate in the waiver. The Department must ensure individuals receive services within 30 days.

Increasing access to community-based long-term services and supports is important to Prince George's County and our rapidly aging population. In just five years, the number of County residents ages 65 and older increased by 26%.¹ Across all age groups, one in ten County residents have a disability.² In those over 65, one-third have a disability.³ To manage these expanding populations' health and wellbeing, additional affordable home and community-based supports will be critical.

In the D.C. Metro area, the cost of home and community-based long-term services is staggering. Home health aide service is estimated at \$157 per 8-hour day, and adult day health care and assisted living facilities are \$91 and \$168 per day, respectively.⁴

¹ U.S. Census American Community Survey Population Estimates, 2013-2018

² 2017 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, Table S1810

³ Id.

⁴ Genworth Cost of Care Survey, 2019. <https://www.genworth.com/aging-and-you/finances/cost-of-care.html>

This is crippling for seniors and their caregivers on fixed incomes. Prices for care of individuals with disabilities of all ages are also very high.

The Maryland Department of Health would realize economies of scale by contracting with home and community-based long-term services statewide, leading to an overall reduction of the burden of healthcare costs on seniors. To illustrate the potential cost-savings: a 2009 study comparing the cost of institutionalization against the cost of home- and community-based waiver services found a cost savings in Maryland of over 70%, from \$170,090 to \$48,305 per patient per year.⁵ Increasing access to these critical services through MDH would have a significant positive impact on the financial, physical, and mental health of older adults and individuals with disabilities in Prince George's County.

For the reasons stated above, the Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 642** and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report.

⁵ "The Costs of Deinstitutionalization," Deinstitutionalization Toolkit, National Council on Disability, 2012, Accessed on March 3, 2020, at https://ncd.gov/rawmedia_repository/25c204cf_748e_4d6e_9ebe_7d2f70996055.pdf