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**HB 945 Human Services - Critical Medical Needs Program - Application for Assistance
Favorable
House Economic Matters
February 11, 2021**

Good afternoon Chairman Davis and Members of the House Economic Matters Committee. My name is Laurel Peltier and I also volunteer at Gedco CARES. I am a lead advocacy volunteer for AARP Maryland. As you know, AARP Maryland is one of the largest membership-based organizations, encompassing more than 850,000 members. AARP MD overwhelmingly supports **HB 945 Human Services - Critical Medical Needs Program - Application for Assistance**. We thank Delegate Carey for sponsoring this important legislation.

AARP is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, nationwide organization that helps people turn their goals and dreams into real possibilities, strengthens communities and fights for the issues that matter most to families such as healthcare, employment and income security, retirement planning, affordable utilities and protection from financial abuse.

HB 945 allows a person over 60 using a navigator will not be required to provide a medical certificate. This will fast track assistance an eliminating an onerous step. While AARP normally does not advocate on age related legislation, this bill will make it easier for an individual to get the assistance they need especially an individual who has chronic illness.

AARP supports making it easier to ensure those with critical medical needs are not subject to utility disconnection and get the help they need to manage their utility bills. We therefore support the bill.

AARP believes that policymakers should ensure consumers have access to reliable, safe, and high-quality utility electric and gas services. Services should be offered at just and reasonable rates. Fair terms and conditions, as well as minimum service standard protections, must be included.

AARP
Real Possibilities

AARP also believes that policymakers should prohibit unfair, deceptive, or abusive acts or practices. These include unfair early termination penalties and misleading marketing practices.

For these reasons, we ask for a FAVORABLE report on HB 945. If you have questions, please contact Tammy Bresnahan at tbresnahan@aarp.org or by calling 410-302-8451.