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SB 204 - Health Care Facilities – Assisted Living Programs – Memory Care and Alzheimer’s Disease Unit Regulations

Hearing before the Senate Finance Committee, February 11, 2021

Position: SUPPORT

The Public Justice Center (PJC) is a not-for-profit civil rights and anti-poverty legal services organization that seeks to advance social justice, economic and racial equity, and fundamental human rights in Maryland. Our Workplace Justice Project aims to ensure that our state’s low-wage workers receive fair and full payment for their labor, as well as other basic protections on the job. The PJC **supports SB 204** and urges a **favorable** report.

We must treat direct care workers as the professionals they are by investing in this critically important workforce.

- Direct care workers, including those who work at assisted living facilities, perform extraordinarily difficult work that allows older adults and people with disabilities to live outside of nursing facilities and in their communities.
- Unfortunately, despite the importance of these workers, we do not adequately invest in them – either by paying them fairly or by training them appropriately. Caring for individuals with dementia involves particular skills. Training on those skills is absolutely necessary.
- SB 204 would take a big step towards treating these workers as the professionals they are by investing in their training. Investments in the direct care workforce help professionalize that workforce, and are a recognition that care work is not “low-skill” work as it is sometimes assumed to be.

For the reasons indicated above, the Public Justice Center **SUPPORTS SB 204** and requests a **FAVORABLE** report.