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WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Senate Bill 28 – Home-and Community-Based Services – Waiver – Participation and Application

Health and Government Operations Committee

March 30, 2022

SUPPORT as Amended

Background: If enacted, Senate Bill 28 (SB28) will ensure that at least 7,500 eligible individuals participate in the Home and Community Based Services Waiver Program. Currently only 4,500 people are being served, with well over 20,000 people on the waiting list. This bill would also require the Department of Health to maintain a waiting list and send applications to those on the waiting list or registry every month if there are under 600 people on the list, or if there are more than 600 people, to send applications to at least 600 people.

Written Comments: The Baltimore Jewish Council represents the Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore and all of its agencies, including Jewish Community Services (JCS). JCS provides services, including in home care to individuals with disabilities and older adults to help them age in place. However, JCS and similar nonprofits do not have the funding to be able to care for the vast majority of people in need of in-home care who cannot afford it otherwise. SB28 would help thousands of individuals every year by making sure that the waiver program is being properly utilized. In addition, it is important that department have enough staff to be able to process the waivers efficiently so that people can begin to receive their services without delay.

With this in mind, the Baltimore Jewish Council urges a favorable report of SB28.

The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of The Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.