



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

P.O. Box 34047, Bethesda, MD 20827

www.womensdemocraticclub.org

**House Bill 80 Home-and-Community-Based Services Waiver-Participation and Applications
House Government and Health Operations Committee – Feb. 9, 2022
SUPPORT**

Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony concerning an important priority of the **Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club (WDC)** for the 2022 legislative session. WDC is one of the largest and most active Democratic Clubs in our County with hundreds of politically active women and men, including many elected officials.

WDC urges the passage of HB0080. This bill will:

Provide access to Home and Community Based Care to more than 7500 Marylanders who are now not able to obtain those services.

The Maryland Medicaid Home & Community Based Services Options Waiver program can provide needed services to the elderly and disabled who would otherwise need nursing home care. But the program, although increased between FY2013 and FY2019 still has a long waiting list (registry) of individuals seeking access to these community options. Currently about 5,000 individuals receive Home and Community Based Services, however the registry now tops more than 19,000 individuals, 3,088 of whom are estimated to meet both financial and other eligibility criteria. Sixty-five percent of registrants have been on the registry for three years or longer. Many wait years for admission to this program (The Hilltop Institute report, May 21,2021).

This bill would eliminate the 7500-individual cap on the program and instead increase the cap to no fewer than 7500 individuals. The Department of Health would be required to develop a plan for waiver participation of not fewer than 7500 individuals and 600 of those on the waiting list (registry) would be sent applications every year.

This bill is important to women and children for two reasons. First, women represent a majority of nursing home residents so would be more likely to require and benefit from home-based services. Women also are often the primary caregivers of elderly or disabled individuals giving up jobs and income to provide care. This program would give those women access to the help they need to maintain jobs and their income.

We ask for your support for HB0080 and strongly urge a favorable Committee report.

Respectfully,

Leslie Milano
President