



Maryland Senior Citizens Action Network

MSCAN

AARP Maryland

*Alzheimer's
Association,
Maryland Chapters*

*Baltimore Jewish
Council*

Catholic Charities

*Central Maryland
Ecumenical Council*

Church of the Brethren

*Episcopal Diocese of
Maryland*

*Housing Opportunities
Commission of
Montgomery County*

*Jewish Community
Relations Council of
Greater Washington*

*Lutheran Office on
Public Policy in
Maryland*

*Maryland Association of
Area Agencies on Aging*

*Maryland Catholic
Conference*

*Mental Health
Association of Maryland*

Mid-Atlantic LifeSpan

*National Association of
Social Workers,
Maryland Chapter*

Presbytery of Baltimore

*The Coordinating
Center*

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Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 511 – Health and Human Services Transportation Improvement Act of 2023

Senate Finance Committee

February 22, 2023

SUPPORT with Amendments

The Maryland Senior Citizens Action Network (MSCAN) is a statewide coalition of advocacy groups, service providers, faith-based and mission-driven organizations that supports policies that meet the housing, health and quality of care needs of Maryland's low and moderate-income seniors.

MSCAN supports SB 511 which would establish the Rural Nonemergency Medical Transportation Program for hospitals to coordinate transportation provided by nonprofit organizations to or from medical services for eligible individuals. It would provide an appropriation of at least \$1 million dollars to the Maryland Department of Health to fund the program. The bill also establishes a much-needed State Coordinating Committee for Health and Human Services Transportation in the Maryland Department of Transportation.

It is important to note that this proposed transportation option would actually save far more than it costs. Thousands of elderly patients require medical transportation services every day to address a variety of debilitating health conditions which threaten their ability to remain at home in the community. When the deterioration in the health of seniors results in nursing home placement just because they are unable to receive the medical transportation they need, the costs can be staggering. The current **annual cost of nursing home placement in Maryland is \$108,258** – so nursing home placement of just 150 seniors who cannot reach essential medical care **could cost as much as \$16.2 million dollars!** Thus a **\$1 million dollar investment in the Rural Nonemergency Medical Transportation Program could result in \$15.2 million dollars in savings for taxpayers.**

In order to provide as many options as possible for the program, we respectfully request an amendment which would make local Transit agencies as well as non-profits eligible to participate in the rural transportation program, as there may be areas in the state where the Transit agencies may be more able to assist than nonprofits.

MSCAN appreciates the opportunity to provide supportive testimony on behalf of SB 511 with amendments. Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation. On behalf of the rural seniors of Maryland, we will be grateful for a favorable report.