

**TO:** Finance Committee  
**FROM:** LeadingAge Maryland  
**SUBJECT:** Senate Bill 875, Miriam Kelty Aging and Senior Social Connection Hub and Spoke Pilot Program Elderly  
**DATE:** March 1, 2024  
**POSITION:** Favorable

LeadingAge Maryland supports Senate Bill 875, Miriam Kelty Aging and Senior Social Connection Hub and Spoke Pilot Program

Elderly

LeadingAge Maryland is a community of more than 140 not-for-profit aging services organizations serving residents and clients through continuing care retirement communities, affordable senior housing, assisted living, nursing homes and home and community-based services. Members of LeadingAge Maryland provide health care, housing, and services to more than 20,000 older persons each year. Our mission is to be the trusted voice for aging in Maryland, and our vision is that Maryland is a state where older adults have access to the services they need, when they need them, in the place they call home. We partner with consumers, caregivers, researchers, public agencies, faith communities and others who care about aging in Maryland. LeadingAge supports innovative community-based care models that promote healthy aging-in-place and an intervention for social isolation and loneliness in older adults.

Senate Bill 875 establishes the Miriam Kelty Aging and Senior Social Connection Hub and Spoke Pilot Program in the Maryland Department of Aging. Under this proposed program, the Montgomery County Consortium will establish a 3-year strategic plan for the pilot program. They will also be responsible for submitting annual reports to the Department of Aging regarding the implementation of the plan in several key areas. These areas include administration, direct services provided, operations, programming, fund-raising, outreach, financials, and client satisfaction among leaders of the villages. The Governor must include an \$80,000 appropriation for the pilot program. These funds are to be used for employing an operations manager, fund-raising, marketing and outreach, and programming. At the end of the three-year program, the Consortium will provide a comprehensive report to the Department of Aging which will include best practices for creating and operating a hub and spoke model, establishing a hub and identifying resources within the community, and identifying the capacity of each hub.

The Village Model is a promising model for the care of older adults in the future. It is consumer-driven and prioritizes aging-in-place. That it is embedded within the community contributes to the model's sustainability. It also promotes engagement with the community which can be a protective factor against social isolation and loneliness in older adults. Social relationships have been demonstrated as an important indicator of positive health outcomes in

older adults. Older adults who actively participate in their Villages experience improvements in social and civic engagement, quality of life, and confidence in believing they can age in their own homes.

Successful communities are also active in other parts of the state, such as Baltimore County. LeadingAge Maryland particularly supports the bill's provisions in identifying the capacity of each hub, including geographic and population capacity along with developing recommendations regarding how best to support interested and diverse and underserved communities with the development of villages.

For these reasons, LeadingAge Maryland respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 875.

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