



COMMISSION ON AGING

February 9, 2022

The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass
Chair, House Health and Government Operations Committee
Room 241, House Office Building
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: HB 80 - Favorable

Dear Delegate Pendergrass,

On behalf of the Montgomery Commission on Aging (CoA), I express support for HB 80, Home and Community-Based Services Waiver - Participation and Applications, which will maximize the number of slots available under the Maryland Home and Community-Based Services Waiver and improve the rate at which slots are offered to those on the waiting list.

The CoA is authorized by the Older Americans Act, P.L. 116-131, and was established by Montgomery County in 1974 to advise County government on the needs, interests and issues of Older Adult residents, and to advocate on their behalf at the local, state and national levels.

The Commission firmly believes that persons who require help with their activities of daily living much prefer to stay at home rather than be institutionalized in a nursing home. The Maryland Medicaid program has an institutional bias that steers people into a nursing home rather than to receive home and community services. This bias is in part due to a lengthy 8-year waiting list for home and community services, forcing persons who need care to move to a nursing home to receive necessary care. This legislation will aim to reduce the waiting list by utilizing the maximum number of available slots the law allows and opening slots more frequently. Further, the cost to the state is less for home and community services than a nursing home.

Again, the CoA supports HB 80, and we ask the Committee for a favorable report. We thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Barbara Selter

Barbara Selter, Chair

cc: Members of House Health and Government Operations Committee
Montgomery County Delegation

Department of Health and Human Services

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