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HB 36 – Department of Aging – Aging Services – Programs Repeal and Consolidation

House Health and Government Operations Committee

January 23, 2025

Position: SUPPORT

Mental Health Association of Maryland (MHAMD) is a nonprofit education and advocacy organization that brings together consumers, families, clinicians, advocates and concerned citizens for unified action in all aspects of mental health and substance use disorders (collectively referred to as behavioral health). We appreciate the opportunity to provide this testimony in support of HB 36.

HB 36 would consolidate three separate programs for older Marylanders into one comprehensive program that provides a variety of supports to older adults, so that they can continue to live in the community and avoid institutionalization. In addition, the bill removes from statute all references to a now defunct body.

Responsibilities of the “Interagency Committee on Aging Services,” which is referenced in statute, have long been assumed by the Department of Aging. HB 36 simply codifies this change.

In addition, HB 36 consolidates three community-based programs for older adults into one, thereby creating efficiencies, which has the potential to allow more older adults to be served. There are waiting lists for the programs and limitations, and any actions that can be taken to expand services are welcomed.

For this reason, MHAMD supports HB 36 and urges a favorable report.

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