

Maryland Commission on Caregiving

May 7, 2026

10:30 AM -12:00 PM

Meeting Minutes Agenda

Google Meet joining info Video call link:

<https://meet.google.com/hev-nfhr-qci>

Or dial: (US) +1 775-442-4189 PIN: 786 637 297#

Meeting Minutes

- Commission Members: Shari Bailey, Dawnita Brown, Isabella Guyott, Patricia Morris, Yetunde Olobatuyi, Theresa Robertson, Trina Townsend, Kathy Wehr, Molly Wisniewski
- Guests: Dorinda Adams, Estelle Brooks, Teresa Jeter-Cutting, Bevia Hensley, Melissa Karcher, Gina Negri, Kyla Pendleton, Leslie Smith-Ray, Grace Macalino Schauf, Greg Sese, Chalarra Sessoms, Mark Tesoro, Brenda Williams, Donna Wilson
- The April meeting minutes were reviewed and approved:
 - Motion to Approve: Isabella Guyott
 - Second: Patricia Morris
 - Result: Approved
- Upcoming Meeting Schedule:
 - The Maryland Commission on Caregiving will hold meetings in May and June as regularly scheduled.
 - The Commission will break in July and the meeting will be canceled.
 - The Commission will meet in-person on Thursday, August 6th in the Chesapeake Room 2664 Riva Rd, Annapolis, MD 21401

- This in-person meeting will be facilitated by the National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP)
- The meeting is an opportunity to plan Commission activities over the next two years of the current 2025-2028 term.

Legislative Subcommittee Update

- Legislative Subcommittee Chair Leslie Smith-Ray and Commissioner Isabella Guyott presented an overview of the 2026 Maryland General Assembly legislative session and the Commission's legislative review process.

Maryland General Assembly Website Overview

Bella Guyott provided a walkthrough of how to review and track legislation using the Maryland General Assembly (MGA) website.

Key Components of Bill Review

- Reviewing bill sponsors:
 - Whether legislation has broad bipartisan sponsorship
 - Identification of key legislative sponsors or leadership support
- Fiscal Notes:
 - Prepared by the Department of Legislative Services (DLS)
 - Include projected fiscal impacts and supporting information
 - Bills with fiscal impacts exceeding \$1 million may face additional legislative scrutiny
- Bill Synopsis:
 - Provides summary and legislative intent
- Committee Information:
 - Hearings and testimony can often be accessed through committee video links or YouTube pages
 - Members noted occasional website access issues and suggested clearing browser cache if "forbidden" messages appear
- Witness Lists:
 - Include written and verbal testimony submitted on legislation
- Cross-filed Bills:
 - Bills introduced in both the Senate and House to improve legislative navigation and tracking

Legislative Process Overview

The Subcommittee reviewed the stages of the legislative process, including:

- First Reader and committee referral
- Committee hearings and voting
- Second and Third Reader status
- Cross-over between chambers
- Conference committee reconciliation when amendments differ
- Final approval and gubernatorial action
- Chapter designation once legislation officially becomes law

The Commission also reviewed how to access:

- Voting records
- Committee amendments
- Final enacted versions of legislation

Legislative Session Review

Bills Reviewed

The Legislative Subcommittee reviewed 24 bills during the 2026 legislative session.

Bill Categories

- 9 bills were “Watched”
 - Reviewed to determine potential caregiver impact even if caregiving was not specifically referenced
- 5 bills were “Monitored”
 - Monitored after deadlines for formal testimony or letters had passed
- 10 bills received favorable support
 - Included letters of support or support with amendments

Legislative Outcomes

- 4 monitored bills passed
- 7 supported bills passed

Supported Legislation Discussed

The Commission discussed several supported bills, including:

- SB 809 - Economic Study on Caregiver Financial Support - Favorable
- SB 113 - Longevity Ready Maryland Act - FAV with Amendments

- SB 151 - Tax Credit Caregivers - monitored
- HB 634 - LEAD Act - Police Training - Favorable
- HB 724 - Employment Discrimination Caregiving - Favorable
- HB 624 - Hospital Staffing - Favorable

Discussion included legislation related to:

- Children and caregiving supports
- Inclusive state employment opportunities for caregivers
- Hospital staffing and caregiver considerations during hospitalization
- Workgroup development and pilot initiatives

Commission members expressed appreciation for the Legislative Subcommittee's extensive work throughout the session.

Discussion Highlights

Theresa Robertson

- Discussed concerns related to safe staffing and nursing home workforce shortages
- Shared information regarding her documentary project focused on nursing home staffing challenges, *No Country for Old People: A Nursing Home Exposé*
- Announced plans for a walkathon in September to raise awareness about nursing home staffing issues

Patricia Morris

- Commended the Legislative Subcommittee for its work throughout session
- Noted increasing concerns regarding staffing challenges in assisted living and independent living settings
- Requested that subcommittee slides and materials be shared with the Commission

Grace Macalino Schauf

- Shared personal reflections regarding her caregiving journey
- Discussed the importance of reducing caregiver isolation
- Highlighted conversations with employers regarding workplace support for working caregivers
- Discussed broader intersections between caregiving and workforce policy

- Mentioned ongoing planning related to Family Medical Leave Insurance implementation anticipated in 2027

Dorinda Adams

- Encouraged proactive planning for the 2027 legislative session
- Suggested beginning regular Legislative Subcommittee meetings in the fall
- Emphasized the importance of strategic partnerships and coordinated advocacy efforts

Leslie Smith-Ray

- Encouraged the Commission to continue monitoring legislation that successfully passed during session
- Supported early preparation for the next legislative cycle

Molly Wisniewski

- Noted the August planning meeting in Annapolis will be a great opportunity for the Commission to plan for the next legislative session.
- Provided updates regarding Commission membership seats

Shari Bailey

- Discussed opportunities to partner with the Maryland Department of Health regarding caregiver website initiatives
- Highlighted national pilot work and caregiving systems mapping efforts
- Emphasized transparency, collaboration, and proactive planning with partner organizations

Discussion: Artificial Intelligence and Caregiving Policy Review

Theresa Robertson

Raised the question of whether Maryland State Government could utilize artificial intelligence tools to:

- Review legislation for caregiver relevance
- Identify bills aligned with the Commission's mandate even when caregiving terminology is absent
- Assist with drafting customized letters of support

Discussion Highlights

- Members noted that AI can serve as a valuable supportive tool
- It was shared that Maryland has been proactive regarding AI utilization and related technologies

Announcements and Resources

Theresa Robertson

Shared the following resources and announcements:

- *The Caregiver CEO Care Circle* featuring Dr. Barry J. Jacobs PsyD:
 - Topic: “Caring for Someone Who Doesn’t Want Help”
 - Scheduled for May 12, 2026
- Shared documentary trailer for *No Country for Old People*
- Announced upcoming September walkathon related to nursing home staffing awareness

Greg Sesek

- Discussed ongoing challenges related to developing centralized caregiver resource systems
- Highlighted existing county resource guides, Maryland Access Point, and 211 resources
- Referenced new legislation intended to support a “one-stop-shop” approach for caregiver resources

Gina

- Discussed ongoing data collection efforts through the AARP Maryland Pilot “Caregiving in my Community”
- Raised questions regarding coordination with the Department of Human Services and existing resource databases

Mark Tesoro

Shared information regarding collaborative planning efforts by:

- Maryland Department of Aging
- AARP

- Alzheimer's Association

The organizations are planning screenings of the film *Wine, Women, & Dementia* through Maryland Public Television and community watch parties across the state.

Closing

- The Commission expressed appreciation to the Legislative Subcommittee for its leadership and detailed legislative analysis throughout the 2026 session
- Members discussed continuing collaboration and proactive planning efforts for the upcoming legislative year
- Additional materials and presentation slides will be shared with Commission members

Next Meeting

- Thursday, June 4, 2026 from 10:30am to 12:00pm