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DEPARTMENT OF AGING

Department of Aging - DA07
FY2017 Budget

Testimony of Rona E. Kramer, Secretary
Maryland Department of Aging

Senate Budget & Taxation Committee, Capital Budget Subcommittee
March 8, 2016

House Appropriations Committee, Capital Budget Subcommittee
March 9, 2016

Thank you for this opportunity to respond to the Department of Legislative Services (DLS) analysis of the Maryland Department of Aging's FY 2017 capital budget request. The Department extends its appreciation to the DLS analyst, Jared Sussman, who thoroughly reviewed the budget and projects. The Department's response to the DLS recommendation is below:

DLS recommends reducing the allowance for the Harford Road Senior Center to \$300,000 or 50.0% of the total cost of the project.

The Maryland Department of Aging respectfully opposes the DLS recommendation to reduce funding for the Harford Road Senior Center. According to Human Services Article §10-504, the Senior Center Capital Program can utilize the value of real property towards the required match.

The full \$500,000 request is imperative to address critical renovations of the building. As noted in the DLS analysis, the Harford Road Senior Center requires immediate life-safety repairs in order to serve the area's growing number of low-income older adults in need of nutrition, health, and social services. Repairs to the deteriorating interior and exterior conditions of the building (including accessibility, roofing, and HVAC units) are necessary to continue operations. Older adults and their families in the vicinity of the Harford Road Senior Center require a space that is safe, welcoming, and accessible to allow participation in various educational, wellness, and exercise programs.

Maryland senior centers are a gateway to health and social services for older adults. Programs such as chronic disease self management, information & assistance, and congregate meals all support the individual's ability to remain healthy as long as possible. A reduced investment in the Harford Road Senior Center will inhibit the ability of older adults to access wellness opportunities and may increase their future health and long term care expenditures, including those supported by public programs such as Medicaid.