



About LeadingAge DC

LeadingAge DC is an organization of not-for-profit, mission-driven aging service providers throughout the District committed to expanding the world of possibilities for aging in the nation's capital. LeadingAge DC members serve thousands of the District's seniors in affordable housing, assisted living, skilled nursing, adult day, and home and community based services. Our members provide person-centered care through quality programs, shared values and the desire to work collectively to share best practices to help improve the field.

B22-0448 - Senior Tenants and Residents with Disabilities Rental Assistance Program Amendment Act of 2017

LeadingAge DC members strongly support this bill. Our senior affordable housing members have waiting lists that often are years long. While we need to build more affordable housing that can also act as a platform for service coordination and easy access to services, the city is in dire need of housing assistance in general so older adults with low incomes can age in community.

We know that very low income seniors who pay more than half of their incomes for rent spend 37% less on food and 51% less on health care than their non-housing cost burdened peers.ⁱ The Senior Tenants and Residents with Disabilities Rental Assistance Program Amendment Act of 2017 bill can fundamentally change the way too many of our seniors today must choose between paying rent, getting their medicine, and having food. The average rent for an efficiency in DC is \$1504 a monthⁱⁱ. The average Social Security income is about \$1413 a monthⁱⁱⁱ.

A \$500 monthly rental assistance benefit could change the lives of the more than 70,000 seniors 65+ in D.C.

Recommendation

LeadingAge DC has one suggestion to improve this greatly needed bill. We recommend that the eligibility requirements be expanded to include seniors on the waiting list for any federally-subsidized affordable housing in the District, not just housing controlled by DCHA.

Bill 22-0505 - Reverse Mortgage Foreclosure Prevention Act of 2017

LeadingAge DC members strongly support this bill. Older adults who want to remain in their homes need options to financially assist them to age safely in place. According to the National Clearinghouse for Long Term Care Information, long-term care (also called long-term services and supports) is "a range of services and supports you may need to meet your health or personal needs over a long period of time."

As is evident from that definition, there are a lot of unknowns when it comes to planning for one's future needs. A new SCAN Foundation report, Overview of Current Long-Term Care Financing Options, by Eileen J. Tell, summarizes consumer options for financing long-term services and supports. Of the



eight options to finance long-term care, home equity is a main source to finance home and community based services, assisted living or nursing home care. Reverse mortgages or selling one's home can assist in financing health or personal needs as one ages.

This Bill helps provide protections for individuals who opt to use Reverse Mortgages as a way to finance their ongoing needs as they age in place. We commend the Council for their work in protecting the older adults in the District of Columbia through Bills like this.

ⁱ https://dcoa.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dcoa/publication/attachments/Snapshot_of_ElderlyPopulation2007_dcoa.pdf

ⁱⁱ DC fair market rent: https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/fmr/fmrs/FY2018_code/2018summary.odn

ⁱⁱⁱ Social Security income (p. 16) https://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/chartbooks/fast_facts/2017/fast_facts17.pdf