



TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
February 24, 2009

House Bill 317: Silver Alert Program - Establishment

POSITION: SUPPORT (Written Only)

House Bill 317 requires the Department of State Police to establish a Silver Alert Program to provide a system for rapid dissemination of information to assist in locating a missing person as defined in the bill. LifeSpan supports the creation of this program. According to the Alzheimer's Foundation, approximately five million Americans suffer from Alzheimer's disease and three million will wander away at some point. With the increasing senior population, these numbers are expected to significantly increase. A coordinated response is essential to protect these individuals from harm and reunite them with family members. In establishing this program, Maryland will join approximately twelve states that have already established these programs.¹ LifeSpan urges a favorable vote.

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LifeSpan Network is a senior care provider association representing approximately 300 providers, including nursing homes, assisted living facilities, medical adult day care providers, continuing care retirement communities and senior housing communities. Our members provide care to approximately 45,000 seniors.

Submitted by:

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¹ California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas and Virginia currently operate programs. Indiana is currently considering legislation. The U.S. House of Representatives has also passed the National Silver Alert Act (H.R. 632) earlier this month which authorizes up to \$10 million in state grants to develop and maintain Silver Alert programs.