

2025 CO-AGE Legislative Priority

Supportive Decision-Making Documents as an Alternative to Adult Guardianship



The Issue

- Early adults and individuals with disabilities often struggle with decision-making coming from different areas. These areas often include:
 - Health care;
 - Finances;
 - Living arrangements;
 - Education; and
 - Work
- Currently, the only means of assistance for those seeking aid in decision making is through guardianship, which immediately grants power to the guardian in making all decisions for their principal
- Guardianship is currently the only formal process established in Georgia and can take away personal liberties from the many adults and persons with disabilities that still maintain the cognitive faculties to make decisions regarding their well-being

The Recommendation

- CO-AGE proposes the establishment of legislation in Georgia that establishes a formal process for supportive decision-making to create an avenue of assistance for adults seeking decision-making assistance in the least restrictive way. Supported decision-making will maintain the principal's personal liberties by allowing an authorized "supporter" to aid in and access pre-specified documents regarding the principal's health care, finances, living arrangements, education and work
- This process will act as an alternative and supplement to guardianship

The Why

- Many elderly adults and persons with disability still maintain mental and physical capacities to make decisions on their well-being; however, they often want supported decision-making when it comes to their health care, finances and living arrangements
- There is currently no formal process for supportive decision-making outside of guardianship, which can be very restrictive to personal liberties
- Legislation establishing a formal process for supportive decision-making will act as an early alternative and supplement to guardianship while allowing adults and persons with disabilities to remain in control of their decisions and personal liberties

