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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**FUEL FUND OF MARYLAND’S SILVER LIGHTS PROGRAM RECEIVES $150,000**

**FROM NEXTFIFTY INITIATIVE**

(Timonium, MD)—Maryland-based nonprofit Fuel Fund of Maryland is excited to announce that the Silver Lights program which support older adults, has received $150,000 in funding from NextFifty Initiative, a Colorado-based foundation that supports efforts to improve the lives of older adults and their caregivers. This funding will allow the Fuel Fund of Maryland to assist approximately 300 Silver Lights households who are struggling with their bulk fuel needs (oil, propane, pellets, etc.) this winter.

“The Fuel Fund is truly dedicated to providing financial resources to the unique and varied needs of older adults struggling with a utility hardship,” said Sean Dunphy, Fuel Fund Board President, “which is why we created the Silver Lights program in 2021.” “This investment from the NextFifty Initiative will empower Silver Lights clients to stay warm and safely connected to their bulk fuel needs during an unpredictable winter season,” he added.

The Silver Lights program was established in 2021 in the wake of the COVID-19 global pandemic after applications from older adults increased exponentially, after businesses and offices were moved to virtual operations. These closures amplified the digital divide many older adults struggle with and

“In our 40 years of service to the community, the Fuel Fund has never had a program specifically to meet the needs of the older adult population,” said Debbie Brown, Executive Director. “The generosity of NextFifty Initiative came at the perfect time since oil is almost $5 per gallon (up 62% from last year), and many of our Silver Lights clients are on a fixed income,” she added.

In FY21, Fuel Fund provided assistance to 1,734 Silver Lights households, up from 400 older adult households the previous year**.** Fuel Fund does not receive any federal, state, city, or county-wide funding. If you would like to contribute to Silver Lights or the General Fund, please visit www.fuelfundmaryland.org/donate.

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*Since 1981, the Fuel Fund of Maryland has been providing financial, educational and community resources to low-income households in Baltimore City as well as Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, Montgomery & Prince George’s counties who are struggling with their home utility bill during a financial crisis.*

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