



**Testimony for the House Economic Matters Committee
March 3, 2020**

**HB 1147 – Places of Public Accommodation and Public Buildings –
Single-Occupancy Public Restrooms – Availability
(The Accessible to All Act)**

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FAVORABLE

The ACLU of Maryland supports HB 1147, which would require all single-occupancy public restrooms to be gender-inclusive.

AMERICAN CIVIL
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MARYLAND

The ACLU-MD advocates for transgender and non-binary people's rights to live freely in accordance with their gender identity in all areas of life. While Maryland has already made great strides toward LGBTQ equality with the passing of the Fairness for All Marylanders Act, HB 1147 is another step forward to ensure the rights and safety of LGBTQ Marylanders in public.

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Courts in Maryland¹ and across the country have ruled in favor of transgender people's right to use the restroom aligned with their gender identity. However, transgender and non-binary people are disproportionately victims of harassment and violence, and may feel unsafe using a men's or women's restroom. Providing private gender-inclusive restrooms ensures that everyone can feel comfortable when they go to the restroom, so long as nobody is forced to use a private restroom when others have access to additional options.

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Many businesses, universities, and other public places are already converting their restrooms to be gender-inclusive. It is a small step to ensure that all Marylanders, particularly the transgender and non-binary community, feel safe and protected in public spaces.

For the foregoing reasons, we urge a favorable report on HB 1147.

¹ *M.A.B. v. Board of Education of Talbot County et al*, No. 1:2016cv02622 (D. Md. 2018).