



To: Members of The House Judiciary Committee

From: Doyle Niemann, Chair, Legislative Committee, Criminal Law and Practice Section

Date: 3/11/2020

Subject: **HB485 – Hate Crimes – Penalty (Educate Against Hate Act)**

Position: **Oppose**

The Legislative Committee of the Criminal Law & Practice Section of the Maryland State Bar Association (MSBA) **Opposes HB485 – Hate Crimes – Penalty (Educate Against Hate Act)**.

This bill would require, in addition to any other penalty, that a person who has been convicted of a hate crime get at least eight hours of educational training relating to the group or community that that was subject of the criminal act.

While education in general is a good idea, we believe this requirement serves no useful purpose. An eight-hour course of education, no matter how good, is not likely to change someone whose mind is so poisoned by hate that they commit an explicit hate crime. If it does anything, it minimizes the seriousness of the crime.

For the reasons stated, we **Oppose HB485 – Hate Crimes – Penalty (Educate Against Hate Act)**.

If you have questions about the position of the Criminal Law and Practice Section's Legislative Committee, please feel free to address them to me at 240-606-1298 or at doyleniemann@verizon.net.

Should you have other questions, please contact The MSBA's Legislative Office at (410)-269-6464 / (410)-685-7878 ext: 3066 or at Richard@MSBA.org and Parker@MSBA.org.