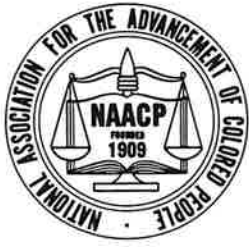


**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND BRANCH**



P.O. BOX 2165
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20847-2165

January 17, 2023

Subject: HB-13 Hate Crimes Civil Remedies

The Montgomery County Maryland Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) appreciates the opportunity to testify and is honored to support a favorable report of HB-13, the Hate Crimes Civil Remedies Bill, introduced by Delegate Charlotte Crutchfield.

The bill authorizes a person who is the victim of a violation of the State's hate crime laws to bring a civil action against the person or persons who committed the act and authorizes a court to award a variety of remedies, which include both economic and noneconomic damages.

For 110 years the NAACP has been in the forefront of securing equality and civil rights for all. The Montgomery County Maryland Branch of the NAACP was formed in 1937. With over 1500 members, this Branch is one of the largest Branches in the country.

In our 85 year history in this county, we have forged relationships with community and county leaders to protect and promote the civil rights of every resident of the county, with a particular emphasis on reforming or dismantling governmental and private systems that deny equity to African Americans and Communities of Color. We offer testimony today in furtherance of our mission to secure justice for all residents of this state.

Most of the victims of hate bias incidents in Maryland in 2020 were African American or individuals who identified as Black. In 2020, there were 321 reported victims of hate bias in the state. Of these victims, 56% identified as Black or African American, 28% were White, 9% were Hispanic or Latinx, and 7% were Asian or Asian American. These incidents are not merely reports of criminal activity. Each of one of these 321 incidents represents a traumatic event in which an individual was emotionally and physically harmed based on their God-given identity. Each of these incidents represents a deep disturbance to the sense of safety for each person in each of these communities. And each of these incidents represents an event which will not be forgotten or healed because full accountability was not available.

For too long, those who perpetrate hate based violence toward an individual or are motivated by hate to damage property have not been held accountable by the civil or the criminal law. While the criminal law has changed and may provide punishment for an offender, it does not adequately address the total harm experienced by the victim.

We are proud to note that the Montgomery County's Office of Human Rights administers a Partnership Fund which is intended to actively demonstrate community support to a victim of hate crimes. That fund provides victims of hate/violence compensation for damages suffered as a result of a hate/violence incident. However, compensation under the Partnership Fund is limited to an amount under \$10,000 and is limited to events which occur within Montgomery County.

We believe that one's ability to seek compensation for a harm should not be limited by place. This bill will provide victims of hate in every corner of Maryland to seek accountability directly from the person or persons who cause the harm. Healing requires justice. Justice requires accountability.

For these reasons, The Montgomery County branch of the NAACP supports this bill and urges a favorable report.

Contact:

1-888-649-5991

www.naacpmont7@aol.com