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Judiciary Committee
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

January 19, 2023

WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 13

HATE CRIMES-CIVIL REMEDY

House Bill 13 will enable victims of Maryland’s hate crimes law to pursue civil remedies in the form of both economic (or other pecuniary loss) and non-economic damages (equal to up to three times the number of actual damages) against those who commit hate crimes.

Hate or bias-motivated crimes are crimes committed because the victim is (or is thought to be) a member of a certain group, such as a racial or religious minority. According to the “State of Maryland 2021 Hate Bias Report”, published by the Maryland Department of State Police, Maryland experienced an average of 385 hate bias incidents each year from 2019 – 2021. Vandalism and malicious destruction of property consisted of 27.7% of incidents reported and verified.

All 50 states and the District of Columbia have enacted criminal laws to deter hate crimes. However, an additional 31 states and the District of Columbia, have enacted laws to provide victims of hate crimes with civil remedies for economic and non-economic damages.

This legislation will benefit all Marylanders because it will act as a deterrence against hate crimes as perpetrators are less likely to commit crimes, where both criminal and or civil penalties may be court ordered. Ultimately, House Bill 13 will protect Marylanders and their rights to live violence-free against hate crimes that may affect both themselves and their property.

I respectfully request a favorable report for House Bill 13.

Sincerely,

Delegate Charlotte Crutchfield