

## *Marylanders for Patient Rights*

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### **MARYLANDERS FOR PATIENT RIGHTS REQUESTS A FAVORABLE REPORT ON HB547: Crime of Violence – Educational Facilities, Medical Facilities, and Places of Worship – Penalty (Sacred Places Safety Act)**

Marylanders for Patient Rights is a leading advocacy group for patients in our state. We join the Maryland Emergency Nurses Association and the American College of Emergency Physicians in strongly supporting all the goals of HB547 in protecting people in educational facilities, medical facilities, and places of worship.

My testimony will focus on protecting patients in medical facilities, which is part of the core mission of Marylanders for Patient Rights. In 2019, Hospital Patient's Bill of Rights was passed unanimously by the Maryland General Assembly, and signed into law by the Governor. HB547 reinforces those rights, in particular, Patient Right #2: The right to be provided care in a safe environment free from all forms of abuse and neglect, including mental, physical, and sexual abuse.

Violence against patients and against medical workers has increased, particularly in the Emergency Department where long waits can lead to anger and frustration. Patients must have a safe place to receive care, and our medical workers must have a safe place to deliver that care. Patients accessing care are in a vulnerable position and should not be subject to any form of abuse in a medical facility, nor should they be afraid to access the medical care they need. HB547 will make committing a crime of violence in a medical facility, educational institution or place of worship, a felony in order to match the seriousness of the crime.

Please provide a favorable report on HB547, and help to protect Maryland patients and medical staff.

Thank you,

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