



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 0233

**Labor and Employment - Mandatory Meetings on Religious or Political
Matters - Employee Attendance and Participation**

(Maryland Worker Freedom Act)

Economic Matters Committee

FAVORABLE

TO: Del. C. T. Wilson, Chair; Del. Brian M. Crosby Vice-Chair; and the Members of the House Economic Matters Committee

FROM: Rev. Kenneth Phelps, Jr., The Episcopal Diocese of Maryland

DATE: January 30, 2025

The Episcopal Church believes in the free practice of religion and “encourages all Episcopalians and all people of good will to ponder anew the horror of religious bigotry and rededicate themselves to purging from their own souls and society all traces of such racism and religious bigotry, including and especially anti-Semitism and Islamophobia.” Episcopalians are called to remember, in prayer and action, that God creates all humankind equal, that God enlightens every human who enters the world – bidden or unbidden - and that God as Spirit goes where it wants, and not in accordance with divisions contrived by humans, and that racism and religious bigotry are utterly incompatible with belief in Christ -- a fact all Christians must each reflect in word and deed.

We also believe that freedom of religion is also freedom from religion. The same extends to the political ideologies. People are entitled to their own opinions – even bad ones – but not to the extent that they bring physical, emotional, economic or spiritual harm to another.

This bill would give workers recourse when confronted by religious bias and bigotry or political intimidation.

The Diocese of Maryland requests a favorable report.