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**LETTER OF SUPPORT
HOUSE BILL 39 & SENATE BILL 356**

February 18, 2025

Chair Clippinger and Chair Smith:

On behalf of the LGBTQ+ Caucus, we are writing to express our support of **HB39/SB356: Public Health - Prohibition on Transfer of Human Immunodeficiency Virus - Repeal**. As advocates and stewards of the LGBTQ+ community, we believe this bill will protect, strengthen, and secure LGBTQ+ rights for all LGBTQ+ residents. The benefits and effects of passing the proposed legislation will create a positive and long-lasting change for all of Maryland.

HB39/SB356 removes stigmatizing anti-HIV language from the health code. HIV is the only specifically criminalized infectious disease in the Maryland code. The criminal charge in the language we're trying to repeal hinges on whether someone knows their status, thus discouraging testing to avoid prosecution. The repeal will lead to better health outcomes and less criminalization for LGBTQ+ folks living with HIV and Black folks living with HIV.

Thank you for considering the bill's positive effects on the LGBTQ+ community. Please reach out to us regarding any additional questions or concerns on the bill. We appreciate your efforts to foster community and further the rights of all Marylanders.

Respectfully,

Delegate Kris Fair
Chair