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**Testimony Before the
Senate Finance Committee**
February 13, 2020
Senate Bill 547: Health Care Facilities -
Hospitals and Related Institutions - Discrimination Protections
Written Testimony Only

POSITION: SUPPORT

On behalf of the members of the Health Facilities Association of Maryland (HFAM), we appreciate the opportunity to express our support for Senate Bill 547. HFAM represents over 170 skilled nursing centers and assisted living communities in Maryland, as well as nearly 80 associate businesses that offer products and services to healthcare providers throughout the state. Our members provide services and employ individuals in nearly every jurisdiction in the state. HFAM members provide quality and cost-efficient care to the majority of the 5.8 million total Medicaid patient days in Maryland skilled nursing and rehabilitation centers annually.

HFAM supports this legislation and its intent to prohibit hospitals and related institutions from discriminating in admitting or providing care for an individual based on the individual's sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or creed, citizenship, age, physical or mental disability, genetic information or ancestry, as well as the type of treatment sought by the individual.

Hospitals and other healthcare centers have an obligation to admit patients and provide care equally and without discrimination to all individuals regardless of the characteristics that this legislation protects. Individuals in need of healthcare deserve equal access to that care at a location of their choosing as long as the care sought can be clinically best provided at that hospital or related institution. No individual should be turned away for care based on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or creed, citizenship, age, physical or mental disability, genetic information or ancestry.

For these reasons, we request a favorable report from the committee on Senate Bill 547.

Submitted by:

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