



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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TO: Delegate Luke Clippinger, Chair
Delegate Vanessa E. Atterbeary, Vice Chair
Judiciary Committee Members

FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus

RE: HB541 Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission - Training Requirements - Hate Crimes

The MLLC supports HB541 Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission - Training Requirements - Hate Crimes

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation which improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a voice in the development of public policy affecting the Latino community and the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB541.

According to the Maryland Department of State Police 2018 Hate Bias Report, the State experienced an average of 356 hate biased incidents each year from 2016 – 2018. The number of hate crimes rose for Latino victims from 2017 to 2018. With such high occurrences of hate crimes and hate biased incidents, it is critical to implement standards for training and reporting. Additionally, many events go unreported due to fear of retaliation or presumptions that nothing will result in going to local law enforcement. As our police officers are tasked with protecting and serving our communities, they must be well-equipped and trained for these law violations, so that all populations in Maryland are safe. Standardizing hate crime training is just another tool for law enforcement to better perform their duties.

HB541 creates a uniform method for hate crime training throughout the state. Entry level and in-service officers every three years, will be trained on how to recognize, respond, and report incidents of hate according to the Maryland Department of State Police's procedures. By further educating the public and our local police departments on hate biased incidents and crimes, we are setting the tone that there is no place for hate in the state of Maryland.

The MLLC supports this bill and seeks your favorable report on HB541.