



**Testimony for the House Judiciary Committee
February 11, 2020**

**HB 541 Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission -
Training Requirements - Hate Crimes**

FAVORABLE

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The ACLU of Maryland urges a favorable report on HB 541, which would require the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission (MPTSC) to develop and maintain a uniform, statewide training and certification curriculum to improve law enforcement's response to hate crimes in our state.

According to news reports, there were multiple reports of nooses and swastikas being placed across the state in 2018.¹ It is an undeniable fact of our history that marginalized persons and groups continue to be targets of violence, threats, and acts of intimidation.

According to the statewide hate/ bias incident reports, in 2017, 398 hate incidents were reported to law enforcement in Maryland, an increase of 103 reported incidents (34.9%) from 2016. Of the 398 incidents reported in 2017, 183 were verified, 208 were found to be inconclusive, and 7 were determined to be unfounded. The vast majority of these incidents were based on race, ethnicity, or ancestry.²

Importantly, in 2017, law enforcement had a 16.7% arrest rate for verified incidents with a race/ethnicity/ancestry bias, a 13.6% arrest rate for verified incidents with a religious bias, a 23.8% arrest rate for verified incidents with a sexual orientation bias, and a 0% arrest rate for those with a bias against gender identity.

For the foregoing reasons, we urge a favorable report on HB 541.

¹ See for example, Baltimore Sun, [Noose found near Patterson Park Pagoda](#) (Dec. 3, 2018); CBS Baltimore, [Another Noose Found At Chesapeake Bay Middle School](#) (Dec. 19, 2018); Baltimore Sun, [University of Maryland Police investigating swastika, anti-LGBT messages found in dorms](#) (Sept. 5, 2018).

² State of Maryland 2017 Hate/ Bias Report (available at <http://www.mcac.maryland.gov/resources/2017%20Maryland%20Hate%20Bias%20Report.pdf>).

