



Council on American-Islamic Relations

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Honorable Delegate Luke Clippinger Chair, House Judiciary Committee 101 House Office Building 6 Bladen Street Annapolis, MD 21401	Senator William C. Smith, Jr. Chair, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee 2 East Miller Senate Office Building 11 Bladen Street Annapolis, MD 21401
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Re: Testimony in SUPPORT of HB541/SB633 - Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission – Training Requirements – Hate Crimes

Good afternoon Chairmen Clippinger and Smith:

On behalf of the Council on American Islamic Relations, thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 541/Senate Bill 633 sponsored by Delegate Lesley Lopez and Senator Jeff Waldstreicher.

CAIR is America’s largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy group. We are dedicated to protecting civil rights for all, enhancing the understanding of Islam, empowering American Muslims, and promoting justice. As an organization, we track instances of bias and hate motivated incidents across the country. In the past few years we have seen a steady increase in the amount of individual and institutional prejudice against American Muslims, especially against the African and Black Muslim communities who comprise at least 1/3 of the American Muslim population.

The state of Maryland reported 81 total bias motivated incidents in the year 2018, including alt-right stickers posted on campus at the University of Maryland, College Park, swastikas in multiple cities including Silver Spring, Bowie, Baltimore, and on campus at the University of Maryland Baltimore County.¹

With the increase of hate crimes being reported, it is vital that those who protect and serve our community be trained in how to respond to these incidents. These blatant acts are divisive and create fear in the hearts of Maryland residents. House Bill 541/Senate Bill 633 introduces training standards that specifically prioritize training law enforcement agencies on appropriately handling hate crimes. This bill will help ensure that officers are protecting and

serving while listening to the needs of their communities. We believe that this bill is a step in the right direction towards creating a Maryland where people of all backgrounds don't have to live in fear of intolerance or persecution. Therefore, we urge a favorable report on House Bill 541/Senate Bill 633.

Sincerely,

Zainab Chaudry, Pharm.D.
Director, CAIR Office in Maryland
Council on American-Islamic Relations

1. <https://patch.com/maryland/annapolis/hate-crimes-maryland-fbi-report-shows-increase>