

February 25, 2020

House Bill 741

**Public Safety - Empowering Communities to Counter Racially Motivated Violent
Extremism Program Fund - Establishment**

House Judiciary Committee

Position: FAVORABLE

Anne Arundel County **SUPPORTS** House Bill 741 - Public Safety - Empowering Communities to Counter Racially Motivated Violent Extremism Program Fund - Establishment.

Unfortunately, we have seen a rise in the number of hate bias incidents in Anne Arundel County and elsewhere. According to Maryland State Police statistics, hate crime incidents rose by 116 percent between 2015 and 2016. The most recent Hate Bias Report from the Maryland State Police shows that reported incidents increased from 203 in 2015 to close to 400 in 2018. We must make clear to all Marylanders that incidents of hate will not be tolerated. In order to do that, Maryland law must give law enforcement the training and tools to respond to and prosecute offensive behavior.

House Bill 741 creates an Empowering Communities to Counter Racially Motivated Violent Extremism Program Fund. The Fund would provide grant assistance to local governments to administer programs that train individuals on identifying warning signs of racially motivated violent extremism, as well as best practices for reporting and preventing racially motivated violent extremism.

Hate of any kind has no place in Maryland, and HB741 would give Maryland local governments, including Anne Arundel County, important support to properly educate and train its residents on how to recognize and report racially motivated violent extremism.

Anne Arundel County supports this legislation because we must use every tool to combat bigotry, racism, and antisemitism in Anne Arundel County and across the state. Accordingly, Anne Arundel County respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 741.