



LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS OF MARYLAND, INC.

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February 4, 2020

Delegate Luke Clippinger
Chair, Judiciary

Delegate Vanessa Atterbeary
Vice Chair, Judiciary

Dear Chair Clippinger and Members of the Committee:


The Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland has voted to offer favorable support for HB 917 –Hate Crimes- Protected Class- Prohibition. The purpose of this legislation is a result of the murder of the 2nd Lt. Richard Collins, III. This bill is vitally important because it provides additional protections for African Americans against hate crimes.


On May 20, 2017 newly commissioned second Lt. Richard Collins, III was visiting a friend at the University of Maryland College Park to celebrate their graduation from college. Collins was going to graduate from Bowie State University the following week. Lt. Collins' friend was going to graduate from the University of Maryland the following morning.

At approximately 3 a.m., Lt. Collins was stabbed in the chest by Sean Urbanski, killing him. At the conclusion of the trial, in dismissing the hate crime count, the court held that the hate crime statute lacked clarity to make the ruling under the current statute. Evidence presented during the trial showed several racist and white supremacist photos and meme's depicting African Americans and Jewish people.

We feel this legislation is important because it provides additional protections for African Americans (as well as other protected classes- race, religion, gender, etc.) against hate crimes. For this reason, the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland supports HB 917.

Respectfully,


Darryl Barnes
Chair, Legislative Black Caucus
of Maryland


Edith Patterson
1st Vice Chair, Legislative Black
Caucus of Maryland