



February 10, 2020

Delegate Luke Clippinger and Senator William Smith, Jr.
Chair, Judiciary and Chair, Judicial Proceedings
House Office Building and Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Support for HB917/SB606 Criminal Law- Hate Crimes- Basis (2nd Lieutenant Richard Collins, III's Law

Dear Chairman Clippinger, Chairman Smith and Respective Committee Members,

I am submitting this written testimony to offer my support for HB917/SB606 Criminal Law - Hate Crimes - Basis (2nd Lieutenant Richard Collins, III's Law). As the prosecutor for Baltimore City my most important task is to serve justice. Justice is the only barometer of success at the Baltimore City State's Attorney Office (SAO), which is why my prosecutors are sworn to aggressively pursue "justice over convictions" in every case. Justice is doing what is fair and appropriate in each case, taking into account the nature of the crime, its impact upon the victim, and the circumstances of the defendant. Sometimes justice requires a conviction and lengthy prison sentence, but other times justice requires dropping all charges, or diverting a defendant out of the criminal justice system to drug rehabilitation, education or job training.

In serving Justice, my office remains steadfast in ensuring that any crime committed because of one's race, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender and gender identity is not left unpunished. Yet, these crimes committed for the aforementioned reasons are on the rise in our Country. The [FBI's 2018 report](#) documented an **increase in hate crimes against African Americans, members of the LGBTQ+ community, Native Americans, Jews, and Muslims**. Law enforcement agencies submitted incident reports involving 5,850 criminal incidents and 6,885 related offenses motivated by bias toward race, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender, and gender identity. 7,173 reported hate crimes were committed against individuals, and another 2,338 were committed against property. Several states do not have comprehensive laws to cover hate crimes and Maryland must act now. Hate crimes are the highest it has been in two decades. Maryland must ensure that when crimes are committed because of hatred or amicus for one's race, gender, religion, or sexuality- justice must be served – they must be protected. However, this cannot happen if the loophole in the current hate crimes statute remains.

Last year alone, The Baltimore Sun compiled nearly 700 hate incident reports it had obtained from public records requests into a database. Most of the reported incidents do not end in a criminal conviction. Of the 100 incidents verified by police last year, less than 14 resulted in an arrest and even less in conviction. HB917/SB606 Criminal Law - Hate Crimes - Basis (2nd Lieutenant Richard Collins, III's Law) closes the loophole in current Maryland law and reflects

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the values and morals that our wonderful State of Maryland espouses. It will end the stunning and depressing statistics that the Sun found regarding Hate Crimes and their convictions in Maryland.

HB917/SB606 Criminal Law - Hate Crimes - Basis (2nd Lieutenant Richard Collins, III's Law) will end the loop holes in Maryland Hate Crimes law and hold those who enact crimes because of hate accountable for their hate. I respectfully urge both committees to provide favorable report on HB917/SB606- 2nd Lt. Richard Collins, III Law.

Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marilyn J. Mosby". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Marilyn" and last name "Mosby" clearly legible.

Marilyn J. Mosby
State's Attorney for Baltimore City