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Washington County

Appropriations Committee

Public Safety and
Administration Subcommittee



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**Testimony in Support of House Bill 1497 Crimes - Transfer of Human
Immunodeficiency Virus While Committing Sexual Crime**

Chairman Clippinger, Vice Chair Atterbeary, & Members of the Judiciary
Committee,

In the Summer of 2019, our local community was shocked to hear that a young autistic boy was raped while hiking along the Appalachian Trail. His assailant was Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) positive.

Currently in Maryland, an individual is prohibited from knowingly transferring or attempting to transfer HIV to another individual. A violator is guilty of a misdemeanor upon conviction, however this is only punishable by a maximum of three years and/or a fine not exceeding \$2,500. We feel the punishment should be stronger for someone who knows they have this life-altering disease, yet forces it upon someone else.

HB 1497 would create a sentencing enhancement of 5 years (consecutive to any other sentencing) for an individual that knowingly transfers or attempts to transfer the Human Immunodeficiency Virus to another through the commission of a sexual assault.

Thank you for your consideration. I respectfully ask for a Favorable report on HB 1497.