

State of Maryland

Commission on Civil Rights

“Our vision is to have a State that is free from any trace of unlawful discrimination.”



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March 9, 2021

House Bill 1118 – Health Care Facilities - Discrimination **POSITION: Support**

Dear Chairperson Pendergrass, Vice Chairperson Peña-Melnyk, and Members of the House Health & Government Operations Committee:

The Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (“MCCR”; “The Commission”) is the State agency responsible for the enforcement of laws prohibiting discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and state contracts based upon race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, physical and mental disability, and source of income.

House Bill 1118 prevents a comprehensive care or extended care facility from discriminating against an individual or resident based on the individual’s or resident’s actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or HIV status. Each facility must post a required notice of these prohibitions in a form developed by the Maryland Department of Health and include the notice in any materials that include the facility’s nondiscrimination policy. A person who violates any provision of the bill is subject to existing penalties, as specified.

§19-355 of the Health – General Article currently prohibits a hospital or related institution from discriminating against any individual with respect to the individual's medical care because of the race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability of the individual. The provisions of HB1118 are consistent with current law, extending anti-discrimination protections to individuals based on their disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity (as defined in Title 20 of the State Government Article) when they access needed health care services at a comprehensive care or extended care facility.

Therefore, the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights urges a favorable vote on HB1118. Thank you for your time and consideration of the information contained in this letter. The Maryland Commission on Civil Rights looks forward to the continued opportunity to work with you to improve and promote civil rights in Maryland.