



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MARYLAND

SUPPORT

HB 1088

Nondiscrimination and LGBTQ+ Individuals

Health and Government Operations Committee

3/17/2021

Good afternoon Chair Pendergrass, Vice Chair Pena-Melnyk, and Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee. My Name is Joseph M. Clapsaddle. I am a resident of Arnold, Maryland and a Commissioner on the Anne Arundel County Human Relations Commission. Today, I am representing the Maryland Episcopal Diocese. The Diocese represents 108 parishes and over 45,000 parishioners. stretching from Western Maryland to Calvert County. The Maryland Episcopal Diocese supports SB 768.

Maryland is recognized as one of leading states recognizing the value of supporting its substantial LGBTQ+ residents. This Bill would make it the State policy to provide equal access to courts, agencies, programs, departments, and services for LGBTQ+ individuals; improve safety, well-being, and stability for LGBTQ+ individuals; ensure LGBTQ+ individuals are protected from discrimination on the basis of certain nonmerit factors; and provide appropriate training to employees and contractors of various State agencies and departments.

We strongly believe that each person is a child of God and is deserving of equal dignity and respect. This Bill is a step toward ensuring that everyone in the State of Maryland is treated equally and fairly.

Please vote for inclusiveness and equality.

We urge your support of HB1088.