

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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February 11, 2021

House Bill 257 – Maryland Commission on Civil Rights – Employment Discrimination - Reporting 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 257 requires county offices of civil rights for Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Howard, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties and the City of Baltimore to report to MCCR by October 1 of each year the number of employment discrimination complaints received by their respective local offices. The following data is required from each county:

1. The type of discrimination alleged (protected class, such as race, sex, or disability),
2. The category of job held by the Complainant (such as contractual, full time, part time),
3. Whether the Complainant is a public or private sector employee,
4. The Complainant's country of origin, and
5. Whether the county office of civil rights determined that a violation occurred.

MCCR would then include a review of this data in the agency's Annual Report submitted to the Governor and General Assembly by January 1 of each year, as well as any recommendations for policy changes to address noted discriminatory trends based on data collected by the counties and the State.

The Commission currently maintains data regarding allegations of unlawful employment discrimination, and includes that data in the Annual Report submitted every year. This data is broken down by numerous categories, including the protected class under State law. However, MCCR does not readily have access to employment discrimination data maintained by county offices of civil rights. HB257 establishes a defined information sharing structure between the counties and the State to ensure that information of particular interest to our policymakers are

consistently reported in an effort to identify discriminatory trends, as well as to formulate potential solutions to address these trends.

For these reasons, the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights urges a favorable vote on HB257. 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.