

To: The Judiciary Committee

Date: 26 January 2021

Re: HB 234

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Rev Ray Raysor and I am a resident of Greenbelt Maryland. I am blind and have been a guide dog user for more than 50 years. I live in Franklin Park –a dog-friendly community of about 10,00 residents. Unfortunately, not everyone is a responsible dog owner. Although there are leash laws, sometimes they are not observed. Several times over the course of a year, my guide dog guide and I have been interfered with or attacked by dogs off-leash. This has left my dogs unsure and unable to perform the duties for which they have been trained. Fortunately, none of my guide dogs have not been injured to the point where they cannot work. Friends and colleagues have not been so fortunate.

Without the aid of our trained guide dogs, we are prevented from carrying out daily errands, going to work, traveling on public transport—in a word our independence.

I am in favor of HB 234 becoming a Maryland State law and holding dog owners accountable who are neglectful in leashing and controlling their pets and that the stated penalties will act as a deterrent and put teeth into the law. (Pun intended)

Rev Ray Raysor

President,

CAGDU—Capital Area Dog Guide Users, Inc