

Testimony for Bill HB-982  
Support  
Bishop Antonio M. Palmer  
8019 Orchard Grove Rd, Odenton, MD 21113  
United Black Clergy of Anne Arundel County, Inc.

Dear esteemed Delegates,

I hereby testify in support of HB-982. I am testifying on behalf of the United Black Clergy of Anne Arundel County, Inc. (UBC), a community development corporation comprised of over 50 clergy members and churches throughout Anne Arundel County and South Baltimore. Together, we lend a wealth of experience in helping disenfranchised families in our communities who have been victims of poverty and unwarranted disparities and inequities. These conditions, whether social, educational, financial or environmental has left many individuals in unhealthy mental, emotional AND spiritual resolve.

As pastors, whom many have decades of experience advising families firsthand, are usually frontline responders to assist our communities when crisis occur. The myriad of crisis ranges from family members being victims of gun violence, police misconduct and racial profiling, death of loved ones, lack of school supplies, financial illiteracy, mismanagement or insecurity, lack of necessities such as food, clothing or housing, etc. This list goes on.

We believe that Bill HB-982 can help pastors become further trained in the area of therapy, and give us the validation of the professional work that we are doing to assist our partnered professional counselors and organizations in this continuum of care we provide for our communities. We all work collectively to bring healing to our community; the pastor and church is equally valuable in the unity of the counseling collective.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Bishop Antonio M. Palmer  
UBC, President