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Health and Government Operations  
Committee

*Chair*

Health Occupations and  
Long-Term Care Subcommittee

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Joint Committee on Administrative,  
Executive, and Legislative Review



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Testimony of Delegate Samuel I. Rosenberg

Before the House Appropriations Committee

in Support of House Bill 1075

**Maryland Department of Emergency Management –  
Office of Domestic Terrorism Response**

Mister Chairman and Members of the Committee:

We have seen the carnage violent extremism leaves on minority communities.

Just last month, the FBI intervened to thwart a plot by two neo-Nazis to target several BGE electric substations with gunfire in Baltimore County. Earlier this month, Jewish communities across the country encountered online threats for a “Day of Hate” from far-right groups, forcing extra police patrols, extra security, and extra vigilance at synagogues and in heavily Jewish neighborhoods.

In other states, we have seen murders against the LGBTQ community in Colorado Springs resulting in 5 people killed and 25 wounded, and the racism-inspired shooting in a grocery store in Buffalo resulting in 10 people killed and 3 wounded.

Let us not forget the 2017 murder of Richard Collins, a Bowie State ROTC Candidate, who was murdered by an “alt-right” extremist. We must take the initiative against extremist behavior so that we keep Maryland families and communities safe.

We can and must do so consistent with the First Amendment.

In December 2022, The Maryland Office of Emergency Management submitted a summary report with recommendations from its Task Force on Preventing and Countering Domestic Terrorism. The report proposes important actions we can take to combat domestic terrorism in Maryland.

House Bill 1075 would codify the recommendations of the Task Force and make clear that Maryland will vigilantly oppose all forms of violent extremism.

HB 1075 would establish an Office of Domestic Terrorism Response in the Department of Emergency Management. The Office would work with federal, state, and local agencies to:

1. Maximize the roles of colleges and universities in researching and developing professional training on how to combat violent extremism;
2. Raise awareness among the public about violent extremism, hate crimes, domestic terrorism, and international terrorism;
3. Develop multidisciplinary interventions for those at risk of becoming radicalized; and
4. Facilitate the rehabilitation and reintegration of individuals into society who participate in violent extremism.

The bill also requires the Office to report annually to the General Assembly and the Governor on its activities, legislation, and resources it needs to carry out its purpose and duties. The passage of HB 1075 will formalize the coordination between various state actors and strengthen our capabilities to address and prevent violent extremism.

I urge the committee to give HB 1075 a favorable report.

March 9, 2023