



Date: March 30, 2023

To: Senator William C. Smith Jr., Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee
Senator Jeff Waldstreicher, Vice Chair

From: Rob Malone, Chief Executive Officer, The Arc Prince George's County

Re: Testimony In Favor of HB 1176

Dear Chair,

I am Rob Malone, Chief Executive Officer for The Arc Prince George's County. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB1176. This bill provides our first responders with important information to protect and serve all of our neighbors.

The Arc supports people with developmental disabilities and their families from birth throughout life. We are a go-to organization for resources and support. I know this bill will benefit many more groups of people, but I see how critical it is for this bill to be enacted, because of the behavioral and mental health challenges some of the people we support have. Interacting with strangers – especially those who may have limited experience or sensitivity with our population – can be disastrous.

This bill is a commonsense approach to ensure all of our residents receive the best support possible – even in dynamic times and periods of crisis. Sometimes split decisions and even life-changing decisions have to happen with first responders and it is clear that having key information about behaviors, abilities, disabilities, anxieties and special needs is a serious matter that needs our action.

With HB1176, the phrase “information is power” is extremely true. I love that the bill gives people and guardians the ability to decide each year what information would be helpful for first responders to know before approaching someone's home.

I ask that you move HB1176 with a favorable report to make sure our first responders are equipped to serve and support all Maryland residents. Thank you for your support.