



**Maryland Commission
on LGBTQ Affairs**

**TESTIMONY OF JEREMY BROWNING
ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR, MARYLAND COMMISSION ON LGBTQ AFFAIRS
INFORMATION STATEMENT ON SB0761
TRANSGENDER RESPECT, AGENCY, AND DIGNITY ACT**

March 15, 2023

SENATE - Judicial Proceedings Committee

The Hon. William C. Smith, Chair
The Hon. Jeff Waldstreicher, Vice Chair

Good afternoon, Chair Smith and members of the committee. My name is Jeremy Browning (he/him) and I am the Administrative Director of the Maryland Commission on LGBTQ Affairs. Thank you for the opportunity to provide informational testimony on SB0761 on behalf of the Maryland Commission on LGBTQ Affairs.

I would like to commend the members of the General Assembly for their work on behalf of our LGBTQIA+ community and their families. The efforts to create a Commission to address the needs and issues of the communities are laudable.

The Maryland Commission on LGBTQ Affairs was created by the 2021 Maryland General Assembly to assess challenges facing our LGBTQ community, collect data across state agencies, study and establish best practices for LGBTQ inclusion, and offer testimony on issues concerning LGBTQ persons before legislative and administrative bodies.

Senate bill 761 represents a critical step towards ensuring that our transgender, nonbinary, and intersex community members are treated with dignity and respect while in the custody of the state.

The bill's requirement for the Commissioner of Correction report to include information regarding the gender identities of incarcerated individuals and the housing status of transgender, nonbinary, and intersex incarcerated individuals will provide important insights into their experiences while in custody of the state.



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The bill also prohibits correctional employees from discriminating against incarcerated individuals on the basis of protected classes and requires the managing official to develop a written nondiscrimination policy that will help to ensure that all individuals are treated fairly and humanely.

Additionally, this bill will ensure transgender, nonbinary, and intersex individuals are not subjected to harmful practices such as housing in restrictive or single-cell housing simply because of their gender identity.

The "Transgender Respect, Agency, and Dignity Act" is a top priority for the Maryland Commission on LGBTQ Affairs and is an important step towards creating a more just Maryland for all individuals, regardless of their gender identity.

With this information, Mr. Chair and members of the committee, I conclude my testimony. I am optimistic that the Commission will work hard and have tremendous success in improving the lives of our LGBTQIA+ communities and their families. I look forward to furthering those activities and I would be happy to answer any questions.