



State of Maryland Commission on Civil Rights

Respect...Integrity...Effective Communication

March 9, 2023

House Bill 1066 – Hate Crimes – Commission on Hate Crime Response and
Prevention Establishment

POSITION: Support

Dear Chairperson, Clippinger, Vice Chairperson Moon, and Members of the House
Judiciary Committee:

The Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (“MCCR”; “The Commission”) is the
State agency responsible for the enforcement of laws prohibiting discrimination in
employment, housing, public accommodations, and state contracts based upon race,
color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, familial status, sexual
orientation, gender identity, genetic information, physical and mental disability, and
source of income.

HB 1066 establishes the Commission on Hate Crime Response and Prevention to
develop strategies to prevent and to respond to incidents of hate crime activity. It
would also be charged with evaluating State laws and policies relating to hate crimes.
The proposed Hate Crime Commission will be required to submit a report to the
General Assembly on or before December 1 each year. The report is to provide
legislative recommendations to address hate crimes in the State.

Each year the Maryland State Police (“MSP”) forwards a copy of the State of
Maryland Hate/Bias Report to MCCR. In its most recent report for calendar year
2021, (the numbers for 2022 have not yet been reported), MSP received 388
individual reports of alleged acts of hate and bias, up from the 375 reported in 2018.
This was an average of 32 reported incidents per month. These incidents can include,
but are not limited to, bodily harm and property destruction. Unfortunately, there is
no uniform approach to addressing the uneven enforcement of hate crimes as well
as the inconsistent reporting of said crimes by the various law enforcement agencies.
HB 1066 is a significant step forward by creating a commission that will centralize
the many efforts and approaches to addressing the continuation of hate crimes.

For these reasons, the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights urges a favorable vote
on HB 1166. Thank you for your time and consideration of the information contained
in this letter. The Maryland Commission on Civil Rights looks forward to the
continued opportunity to work with you to improve and promote civil rights in
Maryland.

“Our vision is to have a State that is free from any trace of unlawful discrimination.”

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