

## **House Bill No. 1163**

In-favor with amendments

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The goal of government and lawmakers should always be to seek fair and just laws that benefit society, not laws that harm and hinder their citizens.

Life for a registered Maryland citizen is difficult. Most of those lucky enough to have found a steady job, surely have not found meaningful work, or a job that pays well enough to keep up with ever growing inflation. Those fortunate to have a home fear that if anything should change, that they could become homeless because of their registered status and be barred from most housing entities.

Now imagine those scenarios involving a person who has a family and children depending on them.

Bill 1163 seeks to protect people with criminal records by making it illegal to discriminate, except for those citizens on the registry. Just as there exists a vast range of offenses for those with criminal records, there too exists a vast range of sexual offenses. Why the distinction between the two? Why does this bill seek to eliminate discrimination for one and not the other?

The registered person is not a cartoon villain, twirling their mustache in the shadows waiting to strike. They are regular people who are desperate to navigate life in a society that blocks their progress at every turn. They are trying to feed, clothe and shelter themselves and their families. They seek the basic rights that in this country are supposed to be inalienable.

Although Bill 1163 has the good intention of seeking to make it illegal to discriminate against most with criminal records, the bill would champion discrimination and give cart blanche businesses the legal authority to continue to discriminate and block registered citizens progress, even where the registry has not.