

Letter of Information - HB1154
Maryland Department of Emergency Management - Office of Domestic Terrorism Response

Maryland Department of Emergency Management
Hearing Date: 5 MAR 2024

Chair Ben Barnes
Appropriations Committee
Room 121
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Chair Barnes,

The Maryland Department of Emergency Management (MDEM) writes **to provide a letter of information on HB1154 - Maryland Department of Emergency Management - Office of Domestic Terrorism Response**. The bill requires MDEM to establish a new office to increase preparedness, prevention, and recovery from domestic terrorism and hate crimes as well as public awareness of the threats related to domestic terrorism.

The Governor's Office of Homeland Security is currently the lead entity for terrorism prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery activities, supported by various State departments including the Maryland State Police, Maryland Coordination and Analysis Center, and MDEM. GOHS was established by [Executive Order 01.01.2003.18](#) by Governor Ehrlich in 2003, which includes as the duties:

(5) Direct and coordinate policy and actions relating to homeland security across State agencies and political subdivisions; emphasize communication and cooperation with subdivision agencies and their first responders on all homeland security concerns; provide executive and legislative recommendations to streamline existing committees, commissions, agencies or departments to prevent redundancy or enhance efficiency.

In 2023, the Maryland General Assembly permanently established the Commission on Hate Crime Response and Prevention under the Office of the Attorney General. In



State Government Article §6-702(H) the Commission is charged with developing strategies to prevent and respond to hate crime activity, and to evaluate state laws and policies relating to hate crimes. Each year the Commission is also required to report to the State Department of Education on policy recommendations related to hate crimes that occur in schools, and to the Maryland General Assembly on legislative recommendations to address hate crimes in the State.

Lastly, the Department of Justice also mandates each state have an [Anti-Terrorism Advisory Council \(ATAC\)](#), managed by the US Attorney's Office for the District of Maryland. Detailed information on the mission and responsibility of the ATAC can be found [here](#).

If you have any questions, please contact Anna Sierra, MDEM legislative liaison: anna.sierra1@maryland.gov.