



**TESTIMONY FOR SB0666
Human Relations
Discrimination by a Place of Public Accommodation**

Bill Sponsor: Senator Charles

Committee: Judicial Proceedings

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative

Coalition Person Submitting: Aileen Alex, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0666 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Recent court findings have chipped away at the protection federal law provides against privately owned facilities that offer food, lodging, gasoline, or entertainment to the public from various types of discrimination. Public accommodation facilities have a responsibility to provide their products and services to all equally on a first come, first served, basis.

Such discrimination limits commerce and the economic growth in Maryland. When we require inclusiveness from businesses, everyone benefits. People feel more respected and valued as a customer.

The Commission on Civil Rights that protects citizens from unlawful employment discrimination should also be protecting citizens from unlawful discrimination by public accommodations facilities. This bill is needed in order to provide more enforcement against this injustice.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.