

SB0666_RichardKaplowitz_FAV
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TESTIMONY ON SB#0666 - POSITION: FAVORABLE
Human Relations - Discrimination by a Place of Public Accommodation

TO: Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB#0666, Human Relations - Discrimination by a Place of Public Accommodation

This bill is an attempt to prevent the public health damage that is present when discrimination occurs, especially in a place of public accomodation where additional harm occurs in that public setting. It offers specific paths and ways to mitigate the harm and compensate the person harmed. It would protect in an employment situation and facilitate civil actions for removal of and prevention of future discriminatory actions.

The American Psychological Association has described what discrimination is and the harm it causes. “For many people, discrimination is an everyday reality. Discrimination is the unfair or prejudicial treatment of people and groups based on characteristics such as race, gender, age, or sexual orientation.” They further delineate what that harm entails “Discrimination is a public health issue. Research has found that the experience of discrimination—when perceived as such—can lead to a cascade of stress-related emotional, physical, and behavioral changes.”¹

Passage of this bill is a step to making Maryland a state that values everyone and provides equal opportunity to everyone. It provides specific paths to stop and fix incidents of discrimination.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB0666.

¹ <https://www.apa.org/topics/racism-bias-discrimination/types-stress>