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March 27, 2024

TO: The Honorable Will Smith
Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Adam Spangler
Legislative Aide, Legislative Affairs, Office of the Attorney General

RE: House Bill 1041 - Criminal Law - Hate Crimes - Religion and Disability-
Support in Concept

The Office of the Attorney General supports House Bill 1041 in concept. House Bill 1041 is essentially technical in its effect. The current law already includes a prohibition on hate crimes based on "religious beliefs." House Bill 1041 also proposes to include the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) definition of "disability" in relation to the prohibition of hate crimes based on disability. Reliance on the ADA's definition of "disability" is routinely used, and the underlying prohibition already exists.

A threat against any person based on hate is a threat to all of us. The Office of the Attorney General is committed to ensuring all Marylanders live without fear of being targeted because of their race, gender, national origin, religion, or sexual orientation.

For the foregoing reasons, the Office of the Attorney General supports the spirit of House Bill 1041.

cc: The Honorable Jon Cardin
Judicial Proceedings Committee Members