



**Maryland Commission
on LGBTQIA+ Affairs**

Bill Title: Fair Housing and Housing Discrimination - Regulations, Intent, and Discriminatory Effect

Bill Number(s): [HB1239](#)

Position: FAVORABLE

Date: February 25, 2025

Submitted by: Jeremy Browning, Director of the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs

To:

House Environment and Transportation Committee

The Hon. Marc Korman, Chair
The Hon. Regina T. Boyce, Vice Chair

Testimony on behalf of the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs

The Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs, created by the Maryland General Assembly, works to serve LGBTQIA+ Marylanders by galvanizing community voices, researching and addressing challenges, and advocating for policies that advance equity and inclusion. The Commission envisions a Maryland where all LGBTQIA+ people can live full and authentic lives. As a vital resource, the Commission collaborates with public officials, agencies, and community partners to ensure the rights and dignity of LGBTQIA+ Marylanders are protected and respected.

The Commission is in strong support of House Bill 1239, which strengthens Maryland's commitment to fair housing by ensuring that discriminatory housing practices are addressed not only when intent can be proven but also when such practices have a discriminatory effect on marginalized communities, including LGBTQIA+ individuals.

Housing discrimination remains a persistent barrier for many LGBTQIA+ Marylanders. National and state research has shown that LGBTQIA+ individuals, especially transgender and nonbinary people, face disproportionate rates of housing instability, eviction, and homelessness. Research underscores the urgency of addressing these disparities:

- Trans Maryland's [Maryland Trans Survey](#), which is the most comprehensive study of transgender experiences in the state, found that 13.6% of respondents had been prevented from moving into a rental property or purchasing a home at least once in their lives due to discrimination.

- The National Center for Transgender Equality's (now Advocates for Trans Equality) [2022 U.S. Trans Survey Early Insights Report](#) found that more than one-third (34%) of transgender respondents were experiencing poverty, and nearly one-third had experienced homelessness in their lifetime.
- The Williams Institute's report, [LGBT People and Housing Affordability, Discrimination, and Homelessness](#), highlights that LGBTQIA+ people have higher rates of poverty, lower rates of homeownership, and higher rates of homelessness compared to non-LGBTQIA+ people.
- True Colors United's report, [At the Intersections](#), reveals that LGBTQ+ youth and young adults are 120% more likely to experience homelessness than their non-LGBTQ+ peers. Service providers estimate that 20-40% of youth experiencing homelessness identify as LGBTQ+.

These statistics underscore the urgent need for legislative action to combat housing discrimination that disproportionately affects transgender and nonbinary individuals. House Bill 1239 addresses this critical issue by clarifying that fair housing protections extend to policies and practices that have a discriminatory impact, even if discriminatory intent is not explicitly stated.

For these reasons, the Commission strongly urges a favorable report on House Bill 1239.

References:

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Romero, A.P., Goldberg, S.K., & Vasquez, L.A. (2020). LGBT People and Housing Affordability, Discrimination, and Homelessness. The Williams Institute.

Pease, M. V., Taylor, S., Blinder, L., Clements, Z. A., & Galupo, M. P. (2024, March). Initial findings from the Maryland Trans Survey. Trans Maryland. <https://transmaryland.org/findings>

Price, C., Chanchan, D., Wheeler, C., Seip, N., & Rush, J. (Eds.). (2019). At the Intersections: A collaborative report on LGBTQ youth homelessness. (2nd Edition) True Colors United and the National LGBTQ Task Force.