



January 28, 2025

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BILL: Senate Bill 0129

DATE: January 30, 2024

POSITION: FAVORABLE

COMMITTEE: Finance

CONTACT: JoEllyn Fountain, joellyn@annapolispride.org

Annapolis Pride's mission is to advocate for, empower, and celebrate the LGBTQ+ community in Anne Arundel County to live fully and authentically. Our vision is a safe, equitable, and anti-racist community where people of all identities thrive.

As such, SB 0129 and the creation of an Advisory Committee and Hospital Reporting within the Maryland Commission and Health Equity is significant to the LGBTQ+ Community throughout Maryland.

The creation of the committee to identify and disaggregate the health disparities attributable to underserved populations in Maryland is essential for the LGBTQIA+ community at its intersection with other vulnerable populations. The LGBTQIA+ population overlaps with every demographic and, in many cases, is known to be over-represented within many of the vulnerable populations.

The LGBTQIA+ population experiences higher rates of mental health challenges, higher rates of cancers due to lack of screenings, higher risks of substance abuse, and lower socio-economic status due to stigma and discrimination in employment. This does not even include the higher rates of HIV infection and other known health issues.

By disaggregating data on vulnerable populations, it will allow providers to address the whole person in the intersectionality of their identities. If you consider only the mental health of an individual without considering their gender identity and socioeconomic status, you are likely to have poorer outcomes.

The Advisory Committee on Hospital Reporting with thus help to understand the full diversity of the individuals being treated in our hospitals and, thus, improve healthcare for all Marylanders.

Accordingly, Annapolis Pride respectfully requests a **favorable** committee report on Senate Bill 0129.