

Written testimony for **HB 1019**: Human Relations - Protection of the Free Exercise of Religion - Please **VOTE YES** on this bill.

Dear Health & Government Operations Committee:

This bill reads "...Prohibiting a governmental authority, under certain circumstances, from burdening a person's exercise of religion; and authorizing a person aggrieved by a violation of the Act to obtain certain relief in a civil action..."

The bill further clarifies "...A GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY MAY NOT SUBSTANTIALLY BURDEN A PERSON'S EXERCISE OF RELIGION EVEN IF THE BURDEN RESULTS FROM A RULE OF GENERAL APPLICABILITY....

...A PERSON AGGRIEVED BY A VIOLATION OF THIS SUBTITLE MAY OBTAIN APPROPRIATE RELIEF IN A CIVIL ACTION IN A COURT OF COMPETENT JURISDICTION. (B) SUBJECT TO SUBSECTION (C) OF THIS SECTION, APPROPRIATE RELIEF UNDER THIS SUBTITLE MAY INCLUDE: (1) INJUNCTIVE RELIEF; AND (2) COMPENSATORY DAMAGES INCLUDING REASONABLE ATTORNEY'S FEES...

...THE PROTECTION OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY PROVIDED UNDER THIS SUBTITLE IS IN ADDITION TO, AND DOES NOT REDUCE, THE PROTECTIONS PROVIDED UNDER THE MARYLAND DECLARATION OF RIGHTS OR THE MARYLAND CONSTITUTION..."

HB 1019 is a great human rights bill. Every person in Maryland is free to practice their religion as they see fit, as long as this practice does not break any other laws, i.e. hurt other people. This right is given under the Maryland Declaration of Rights and the Maryland Constitution. HB1019 upholds this right. And if this right is infringed upon or violated, HB 1019 gives people a means of "appropriate relief in a civil action in a court of competent jurisdiction".

This is a common sense bill. This is a bill that crosses party lines and protects freedom of religion for everyone.

Please **VOTE YES** on this bill and show all Marylanders that you will stand up for their right to religious freedom.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

Trudy Tibbals

A Very Concerned Mother of 3 and Maryland Resident