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The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.  
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
2 East Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

### Testimony of Trans Maryland

#### IN SUPPORT OF

#### **Senate Bill #677: Human Relations - Discrimination in Housing - Income-Based Housing Subsidies**

To the Chair, Vice Chair, and esteemed members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee:

Trans Maryland is a multi-racial, multi-gender community power building organization for Maryland's trans community. In addition to our work running the state's largest name and gender marker change program, in which we offer peer-to-peer guidance and financial assistance to Marylanders seeking a name and gender marker change, we also regularly work with transgender and gender diverse Marylanders who are experiencing housing instability. As part of this work, innumerable transgender Marylanders have detailed to us the barriers they face when trying to access housing.

Accessing housing is a huge issue for many people across the state, especially for transgender people who oftentimes experience extra discrimination due to their gender identity and other factors that are common within the LGBTQ+ community. At least 1 in 5 transgender people face housing discrimination and the same percentage have experienced homelessness at least once in their life ([Advocates for Trans Equality](#)). By eliminating housing discrimination based on income-based housing subsidies, you will be helping reduce these barriers to housing for so many people.

While opponents may express concerns over profits if this form of discrimination is banned, landlords will make the same amount of money as the subsidies are paid from the state directly to the landlord.

If we want to end homelessness in Maryland, we need to make a concerted effort to help people access housing. This is the direct goal of Senate Bill 677. For this reason, Trans Maryland urges a favorable report.