

**House Judiciary Committee**

March 11, 2025

**House Bill 1164  
Right to Rest Act**

**SUPPORT**

The Association of Community Services (ACS) of Howard County, a 501c3 nonprofit, is a membership organization of seventy-seven nonprofit agencies in our community that provide critical services ranging from housing to food assistance, mentoring, legal services, transportation, elder care, and more for our county residents. We are acutely concerned about homelessness in our county.

ACS supports HB 1164, which would prohibit a county or municipality from preventing an individual from resting or sleeping in a public space, protecting themselves from the elements in a way that doesn't obstruct the use of private property, or sleeping in a legally parked vehicle.

Homelessness is an issue in many communities, including Howard County. But the answer is not, and cannot be in a just society, to criminalize behavior that results from economic hardship, a shortage of affordable housing, and systemic failures in our social safety net. Criminalization does not reduce the number of homeless, it only makes it more difficult to address their circumstances and move them into secure housing.

ACS strongly urges a favorable report on HB 1164, the Right to Rest Act.

Submitted by,

*Lois K Mikkila*

Lois K Mikkila  
Executive Director  
Association of Community Services of Howard County  
[lois.mikkila@acshoco.org](mailto:lois.mikkila@acshoco.org)  
443-518-7701