

HB1452_RichardKaplowitz_FAV

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TESTIMONY ON HB1452 - Favorable

Hate Crimes and Hate Bias - Definitions of Sexual Orientation and Hate Bias Incident

TO: Chair Clippinger, Vice Chair Bartlett, and members of the Judiciary Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB1452 - Hate Crimes and Hate Bias - Definitions of Sexual Orientation and Hate Bias Incident

The FBI has reported, as of September 2024, Anti-LGBTQ+ Hate Crimes Continue to Spike, Even as Overall Crime Rate Declines: ¹

The FBI today [released its annual report](#) looking back at hate crimes numbers for the prior calendar year — and for 2023, the hate crime data relating to incidents targeting members of the LGBTQ+ community once again show disturbing, record-breaking numbers. Even as violence in the nation overall is continuing to drop, reports of hate crime incidents targeting people for their sexual orientation or gender identity are rising.

This bill creates a path for Maryland to help turn the tide against this rise in hate and violence. This bill will alter the definition of "sexual orientation" applicable to certain hate crime statutes. It will give police direction for dealing with hate crimes of this nature through defining what "hate bias incident" data is applicable to a certain requirement that the Department of State Police collect, analyze, and report certain information provided by certain law enforcement agencies. Only by understanding and documenting the nature of the crime can we begin to identify solutions to prevent it and deal with it.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB1452.

¹ <https://www.hrc.org/press-releases/new-fbi-data-anti-lgbtq-hate-crimes-continue-to-spike-even-as-overall-crime-rate-declines>