

**House Bill 495**  
**Ways and Means**  
**Favorable**

Honorable Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Ways and Means Committee;

One Pasadena is an anti-bigotry group in Anne Arundel County that works to make Pasadena a safe and inclusive community. This is not an easy job. Pasadena is known for its long history of racism. Pasadena has also embarrassed itself with numerous Queerphobic incidents and attacks. Students have been physically and verbally attacked for being Black, Brown, and Queer. There have even been parents and other community members who have attacked students, and encouraged their children to be bullies. Despite many efforts, including a successful prosecution for a hate crime, the problems continue.

When students turn to us with these issues, we partner with a local student advocacy group, reach out to anti-bigotry teachers for advice, and contact principals to talk. We would love for the students to be able to advocate for themselves and get responses personally rather than needing to find a middle-man. Perhaps House Bill 495 is the way for them to do so.

Please give House Bill 495 a favorable report. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
The One Pasadena Steering Committee  
Pasadena, MD