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The Honorable Vanessa E. Atterbeary
House Ways and Means Committee
131 Lowe House of Delegates Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Testimony of Trans Maryland

IN SUPPORT OF

HOUSE Bill #875: Commission on History, Culture, and Civics in Education

To the Chair, Vice Chair, and esteemed members of the House Ways and Means Committee:

Trans Maryland is a multi-racial, multi-gender community power-building organization for Maryland's trans community. In the past few weeks alone, this community has come under repeated attack by the federal administration. Under President Trump's executive order that the United States will only recognize two biological sexes, male and female, the website honoring the Stonewall Riot of 1969 operated by the National Park Service was forcefully edited to reduce all mentions of the LGBTQ+ acronym to LGB, erasing transgender and queer from the website completely. The National Park Service's access to its website was also restricted so that the changes couldn't be reversed. Black transgender women such as Martha P. Johnson not only started but led the LGBTQI+ movement in the 1960s, and erasing the existence of transgender people from a website honoring the memories of those lost in the most integral and lethal event in the LGBTQI+ movement in the United States is not only an insult but a very intentional effort to completely remove us from history.

Similar alterations to federal websites have occurred across the board – profiles of famous women in science and other minorities have disappeared from NASA's website, for example. The intentional removal of minorities from federal agencies and historical monuments is reminiscent of the beginning stages of Hitler's regime – when the Nazis took control of the government, one of their first acts of terrorism was not to immediately construct concentration camps but to burn tens of thousands of Magnus Hirschfeld's volumes in his Institut für Sexualwissenschaft (Institute of Sexology) in Berlin, where decades of research regarding transgender and queer culture, gender-affirming healthcare, and more were permanently lost. Similar to that of the Nazis, it is the federal administration's goal to ensure that the only history that will continue to be taught is that of the white, heterosexual, cisgender, Christian man.

However, unlike in 1933, evidence of the tampering exists through screenshots and dozens upon dozens of news reports and outraged social media posts. Unlike in 1933, we can hold the federal government accountable, and we can do that by honoring the history of our



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greatest marginalized communities. Maryland's diverse populations deserve to be accurately and equitably depicted in school curriculums around the State. Proper education is the best combatant against ignorance and discrimination, and without consistent input from minorities in the education curriculum, the State of Maryland runs the risk of teaching its students a version of our past that is untruthful and harmful, whether intentional or otherwise. In the wake of the current political climate, it is more important than ever that you stand your ground and refuse to allow our existence to be erased.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report.