



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF

HB573 Fair Housing and Housing Discrimination—Regulation, Intent, and Discriminatory Effect

FAVORABLE

TO: House Economic Matters Committee

FROM: Susan Allen (3463 Rockway Avenue, Annapolis 21403), member of the Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network (MEPPN)

DATE: February 19, 2026

Dear Chair Valderrama, Vice-Chair Charkoudian, and Committee Members,

As an Episcopalian, I uphold the human right of Marylanders to fair and affordable housing.

The Episcopal Diocese of Maryland and its advocacy group (Maryland Episcopal Policy Network) oppose injustice in housing. Our Diocese proclaimed action against discriminatory practices in this statement:

“And we will work in partnership, ecumenically, with all who strive for civil rights, including full protection of the law and redress under the law of discriminatory practices; and for just immigration policies.” (<https://episcopalmaryland.org/advocacy/>)

MEPPN supports HB573 because the bill clarifies when the intention of the actor can be considered in cases of housing discrimination. Significantly, the bill amends the state statute to align with the legal standard that, in many housing cases, the impact of a policy on protected groups is more relevant than the subjective intent behind it.

I found HB573 difficult to read but the overall intent is clear: to establish three tests of when a person can be found in violation or found innocent of housing discrimination against what the bill calls an “aggrieved person.”

HN573 also specifies 10 categories that can be cited as grounds for discrimination: race, color, religions, sex, familial status, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation gender identity, disability, source of income, or military status. This offers housing protection for many Marylanders who may not have formerly been included under housing discrimination statutes.

The Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network (MEPPN) requests a FAVORABLE report.

The Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network (MEPPN) is a ministry of The Episcopal Diocese of Maryland, The Episcopal Diocese of Washington, and The Delaware-Maryland Synod ELCA