

March 30, 2026

HB 649 Advancing Equal Educational Opportunities for All Students in Maryland

House Government, Labor & Elections Committee

Position: UNFAVORABLE

This testimony is in reference to MD HB 649. I am testifying against this bill for four main reasons.

- 1) The HB 850 of 2022 legislation pertaining to discrimination in Maryland is already working. The bill continues to protect citizens from racial, ethnic and gender-based discrimination throughout Maryland.
- 2) There is currently NO grassroots movement indicating that the 2022 legislation needs to be updated or replaced.
- 3) Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (MCCR) has no expertise in the arena of education. The entity has expertise in housing law and employment law but is not equipped to manage school-related issues. MSDE is sufficiently working in the current school space. Duplicating efforts is inefficient and ineffective.
- 4) Employees of the MCCR are already overworked. Plaintiffs wait an average of 1-2 years for their cases to be heard. HB 649 would only drain more resources from MCCR.

Thank you for allowing me to voice my concerns about this bill.

Sincerely,

Kristine Vander Wall