

SB 694: Human Relations - Violations of County Discrimination Laws - Complaints:
Please vote to **OPPOSE** this bill.

Dear Judicial Proceedings Committee:

I am writing to strongly urge you to **OPPOSE SB 694**.

SB 694 would allow individuals alleging violations of local county discrimination laws to file complaints directly with the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights instead of first exhausting remedies through the county's designated human relations or civil rights unit. This change **undermines local control and bypasses county-specific procedures**.

County discrimination laws are tailored to reflect the unique needs, priorities, and community standards of each jurisdiction. **Local human rights commissions or agencies are best positioned to investigate, mediate, and resolve complaints under their own ordinances, often with greater knowledge of local context, faster processing, and community-based solutions.** Allowing direct filing with the MCCR risks overwhelming the state agency with local matters, duplicating efforts, and delaying resolutions.

Respect for local governance is a core principle—counties should retain authority over enforcement of their own laws. This bill weakens that authority and could lead to inconsistent application of discrimination protections across Maryland.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask you to **vote against SB 694**.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration of my concerns regarding this important local governance and civil rights enforcement matter.

Sincerely,

Trudy Tibbals