



NATIONAL FEDERATION
OF THE BLIND
MARYLAND

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Subject: Favorable SB0694 Violations of County Discrimination Laws - Complaints

From: Ronza Othman, President
National Federation of the Blind of Maryland
15 Charles Plaza, #3002
Baltimore, MD 21201 president@nfbmd.org

To: Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

The members of the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland urge the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee to vote in favor of SB0694 Violations of County Discrimination Laws – Complaints. This bill will broaden the power of the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights by allowing it to work with the counties and complainant to determine if discrimination takes place. The Maryland Commission on Civil Rights will have a broader knowledge base on discrimination and will be able to be more effective in determining the remedies that a complainant may receive.

Blind people face many types of discrimination from housing to employment and discrimination by rideshare companies. Many times, a county may not understand the true capabilities of a blind person and would tend to side with the defendant because the county lacks knowledge. For instance, the driver of a rideshare company does not pick up the blind passenger because he doesn't believe that the person can get in and out of the vehicle successfully. The Maryland Commission on Civil Rights will have a better understanding of blind people and their capabilities. SB0694 will make the dream of equality a reality.

For those reasons, we ask for a favorable report on SB0694. For questions, please contact me at President@nfbmd.org or at 443-426-4110.