

## SHORE PRIDE ALLIANCE LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY

Bill: **HB513 Hate Crimes and Hate Bias - Definitions of Sexual Orientation and Hate Bias Incident**

Organization: Shore Pride Alliance., PO Box 5107, Salisbury Maryland 21802

Submitted by: Nicole Hollywood, Board Member

Position: **FAVORABLE**

This testimony is being submitted in FAVOR of **HB513** on behalf of Shore Pride Alliance, formerly PFLAG Salisbury, an organization dedicated to supporting, educating, and advocating for LGBTQIA+ people and their families.

The FBI hate crime report released recently showed that 2025 was one of the most dangerous years on record for LGBTQIA+ people in the United States, with a 5% increase in anti-LGBTQ+ incidents over 2024, which had already reported record breaking numbers.

Frighteningly, *more than 1 in 5 hate crimes are motivated by anti-LGBTQ+ bias*

Here in Maryland, the Maryland Commission for LGBTQIA+ Affairs conducted the first ever comprehensive state-wide needs assessment of LGBTQIA+ Marylanders. With approximately 1300 respondents, we found that **27% of LGBTQIA+ Marylanders reported having been a victim of a hate crime** and when just the responses of transgender Marylanders were isolated, nearly 1 third of transgender respondents reported having been a victim of a hate crime.

Bottom line, data shows that while overall violent crime in the U.S. declined, hate crimes against the LGBTQIA+ community remain "alarmingly high," continuing to be one of the top three reported categories.

Further, members of the LGBTQ+ community have a lower likelihood of reporting victimization due to a lack of trust in, and alleged harassment by, law enforcement according to a national survey conducted by the ACLU.

According to Kelley Robinson, Human Rights Campaign President "LGBTQ+ people need full non-discrimination protections in law, nationwide. All law enforcement agencies must commit to fully reporting data on hate crimes in their communities. It's time we build an America where LGBTQ+ folks don't just survive, they thrive - in every town, every state, every corner of this nation. That's not just a dream, it's our fundamental right as Americans."

Shore Pride Alliance, formerly PFLAG Salisbury supports alterations to our hate crime statute to better encompass sexual and gender minorities. Further, we support the Department of State Police collecting, analyzing, and reporting information provided by law enforcement agencies relating to hate crimes and hate bias incidents. Accordingly, we recommend a FAVORABLE report in committee.

## References

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Hollywood, N. et al. (2026). Preliminary Findings of the Maryland LGBTQIA+ Needs Assessment. Maryland Commission for LGBTQIA+ Affairs.

GLAAD. (2025). 2025 GLAAD ALERT Desk Report. <https://glaad.org/2025-alert-desk/>

FBI (2024). FBI Releases Hate Crime Report. <https://www.fbi.gov/news/press-releases/fbi-releases-2023-crime-in-the-nation-statistics>

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