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The Honorable J. Sandy Bartlett  
House Judiciary Committee  
101 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Testimony of Trans Maryland

**IN SUPPORT OF**

**House Bill #513: Hate Crimes and Hate Bias -  
Definitions of Sexual Orientation and Hate Bias Incident**

To the Chair, Vice Chair, and esteemed members of the House Judiciary Committee:

Trans Maryland is a multi-racial, multi-gender, trans-led community power building organization dedicated to Maryland's trans community. Access to accurate data has been especially critical in our ability to advocate on behalf of and build power among transgender Marylanders. At times, we have taken the lead to collect this data by collecting it ourselves or in combination with academic researchers, as with the 2022 Maryland Trans Survey. At other times, we rely on public data collected and released by government agencies, including reports of hate crime incidents.

Unfortunately, historic relics in the drafting of Maryland's existing hate crimes and hate bias law have all-too-often erased transgender people. At the time sexual orientation was first added to Criminal Law § 10-301, it was defined in such a way as to include gender identity. While the law was later amended to include gender identity as well, we still find too many jurisdictions lump sexual orientation and gender identity together when reporting on hate crimes and hate bias incidents. House Bill 513 will remedy this situation and will require incidents based on sexual orientation and gender identity to be reported separately, increasing the quality and usability of the state's data on the true scope of violence against transgender Marylanders.

We have also seen over recent years that local police departments often dismiss incidents of hate bias due to the perception that they are not sufficiently hateful. By providing an expansive definition of hate bias incidents, House Bill 513 will also clarify what incidents must be records—and must be taken seriously—helping both the collection of data and the protection of marginalized communities across Maryland.

For these reasons, Trans Maryland encourages a favorable report on House Bill 513.