



TESTIMONY

HB1146 Crime of Violence – Medical Facilities and Places of Worship – Penalty (Sacred Places Safety Act)

Bill Sponsor: Delegates Alston

Committee: House Judiciary

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Aileen Alex, Co-Chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in support of HB1146 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. We are an association of unpaid citizen advocates—individuals and grassroots groups in every district across the state—representing and supporting more than 30,000 Marylanders.

Marylanders deserve to feel safe in the places where they seek healing and spiritual grounding. Violence in hospitals, clinics, and houses of worship not only harms individuals—it destabilizes entire communities. These are spaces where people gather at their most vulnerable moments, and they must be protected with the strongest possible safeguards.

HB1146, the Sacred Places Safety Act, makes it a felony to commit a crime of violence in a medical facility or a place of worship. A person convicted under this bill is subject to imprisonment of up to 10 years, in addition to any other penalty imposed for the underlying crime of violence. By designating these as specific felony offenses, the State sends a clear message that targeting these sanctuaries of peace and health will carry significant consequences.

This bill complements the Coalition's longstanding advocacy for community safety and justice. We believe that all Marylanders should be able to access essential medical and spiritual services without fear, regardless of their background or immigration status.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge a **FAVORABLE** report on HB1146.