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**LETTER OF SUPPORT
HOUSE BILL 0104 & SENATE BILL 0049**

February 24, 2026

Chair Bartlett, Vice Chair Davis, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the LGBTQ+ Caucus, we are writing to express our support of **HB0104/SB0049: Unhoused Individuals - Rights and Affirmative Defense**. As advocates for the LGBTQ+ community in the General Assembly, we believe this bill will strengthen protections for all LGBTQ+ residents. The benefits and effects of passing the proposed legislation will create a positive and long-lasting change for all of Maryland.

HB0104/SB0049 would provide a “bill of rights” of sorts for unhoused individuals, establish an affirmative defense of necessity to certain criminal charges relating to trespass or disturbing the peace, and repeal the authority of a municipality to prohibit vagrancy. Providing unhoused individuals with clearer legal rights and strong protections would significantly benefit the LGBTQ+ community because they are disproportionately represented among the unhoused population. LGBTQ+ youth make up a high percentage of unhoused youth, often due to family rejection. Transgender individuals of all ages face especially high rates of housing instability due to discrimination in employment and housing. Strong rights in areas like housing access, anti-discrimination protections, and safety directly address vulnerabilities that affect the LGBTQ+ community at higher rates.

Thank you for considering the bill's positive effects on the LGBTQ+ community. Please reach out to us regarding any additional questions or concerns on the bill.

Respectfully,

Delegate Kris Fair
Chair