



NATIONAL FEDERATION  
OF THE BLIND  
MARYLAND

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From: Ronza Othman, President  
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To: House Judiciary Committee

The members of the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland urge the House Judiciary Committee to give a favorable report to HB0566. This bill criminalizes and prohibits a person from distributing personal information about or images of high school, college, and graduate students with the intent of bullying, doxing, or otherwise causing harm to that person, or willfully disregarding that that student could be harmed. This bill would protect students from underrepresented communities, including blind and low vision students, who are disproportionately targeted by such dangerous behavior.

Blind and low vision individuals are significantly more prone to cyber-bullying, doxing, and other harmful forms of online discrimination and harassment. Research shows that 73% of disabled individuals have experienced online harassment, compared to 50.4% of individuals without disabilities. While there are no specific statistics on doxing, it arguably the most harmful form of online harassment for the blind, because others who publish private information about blind and low vision individuals enable people to target, stalk, and do physical and emotional harm to an already-vulnerable group. A blind or low vision individual is much more susceptible to harm through doxing because they may not be aware of bad actors coming to their homes, following them, or otherwise stalking them.

Additionally, because blindness is an intersectional characteristic, blind and low vision individuals cross other underrepresented groups, including race, color, socio-economic status, religion, sexual orientation, and gender identity, etc. Given the political climate and rising incidents of online bullying and doxing, underrepresented communities have experienced a disproportionate increase in such behavior. Thus, it is critical to protect the blind and low vision community, as well as other

marginalized communities, from online bullying and doxing, the majority of which came about due to bad actors trying to silence such individuals after exercising their first amendment rights.

For those reasons, we ask for a favorable report on HB0566. For questions, please contact me at [President@nfbmd.org](mailto:President@nfbmd.org) or at 443-426-4110.