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The Honorable Jheanelle K. Wilkins
House Ways and Means Committee
130 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Testimony of Trans Maryland

IN SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT TO

**House Bill #1011: Workgroup on Supporting Transgender and Gender Diverse Students -
Established**

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

Trans Maryland is a multi-racial, multi-gender community power building organization for Maryland's trans community. In that capacity we work with transgender young people all across the state, as well as their families, friends, and classmates. Since 2021, we have seen unprecedented attacks on trans youth across the country, at both the state and federal level. While Maryland has thus far resisted joining the bandwagon of anti-trans legislation, we have seen multiple bills this session—including in this very committee—that have targeted trans youth for discrimination.

House Bill 1011 would create a framework to push back against that discrimination by forming a workgroup focused entirely on supporting this extremely at-risk community. Trans Maryland is strongly in favor of the creation of this workgroup, which we believe will bring together stakeholders from across the state to examine the problem in detail and propose solutions that might otherwise go unsupported.

Unfortunately, as drafted, House Bill 1011 could create a workgroup that entirely leaves out the voices and experiences of trans youth, their parents, and the broader trans community. While the bill requires two members to be parents of children enrolled in public school in Maryland, there is no guarantee—and indeed no mechanism at all—to ensure that they are parents of transgender or gender diverse students. Similarly, although the workgroup includes “one member who is a student member of a county board of education,” we are unaware of any such student members who identify as transgender or gender diverse. Any workgroup focused on the issues of transgender and gender diverse students **must** include the voices of transgender and gender diverse youth.

There are a variety of ways in which HB1011 could be drafted to guarantee this inclusion, such as replacing the student member of a county board of education with a member of a GSA or



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other LGBTQIA-inclusive student organization, specifically requiring at least one of the parent members to be the parent of a transgender or gender diverse child, and/or replacement of the two members of the Executive Branch with representatives of the Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs, nominated by the Commission's director. That said, these are only some possibilities, and we encourage the Ways and Means Committee to consider other ways to guarantee inclusion of the community under consideration.

For these reasons **we urge a favorable report with amendments on House Bill 1011.**