



LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY

Bill: **HB13/SB5 Hate Crimes Civil Remedies**

Organization: PFLAG Salisbury Inc., PO Box 5107, Salisbury Maryland 21802

Submitted by: Nicole Hollywood, President of the Board

Position: **FAVORABLE**

SALISBURY PFLAG SUPPORTS CIVIL REMEDIES FOR HATE CRIMES

I am submitting this testimony in FAVOR of **HB13/SB5** on behalf of PFLAG Salisbury, the Salisbury, Maryland Chapter of PFLAG National.

The FBI hate crime report released in December of 2022 shows bias-motivated attacks increasing dramatically, despite a nationwide problem of underreporting. More specifically, the FBI reports that anti-LGBTQ bias attacks have been steadily on the rise in recent years.

Bottom line, hate crimes are very real for members of the LGBTQIA+ community. Research shows that one out of five lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or pansexual individuals living in the United States will experience a hate crime in their lifetime. The rate is even higher for transgender individuals where one in four will be a victim of hate.

According to the United States Department of Justice "Hate crimes have a devastating effect beyond the harm inflicted on any one victim. They reverberate through families, communities, and the entire nation, as others fear that they too could be threatened, attacked, or forced from their homes, because of what they look like, who they are, where they worship, whom they love, or whether they have a disability."

Salisbury PFLAG supports enabling a person who is the victim of a violation of the State's hate crime laws to bring a civil action against the person or persons who committed the act and authorizes a court to award a variety of specified remedies. This legislation is about justice and accountability and sending a powerful message throughout the Free State that Maryland does not tolerate our community members being marginalized by illegal bias motivated acts. Accordingly, Salisbury PFLAG supports HB13/SB5 and recommends a FAVORABLE report in committee.