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**2/25/2020**

**HB728 – Support**

**Employment Discrimination and Discriminatory Housing Practices – Time for Filing Complaints**

Dear Chairman Pendergrass, Vice Chair Pena-Melnyk, and committee members,

HB 728 lengthens the time that persons believed to have experienced housing or workplace discrimination can file a complaint through the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights. The bill helps ensure that employees who believe they have experienced work place discrimination are not penalized for seeking to resolve complaints through internal mechanisms.

Under current law, the short time by which a complaint of alleged discrimination must be filed with the MCCR may run out while internal mechanisms are exhausted. As a result, employees must either file with the MCCR while attempting to work through their organizations internal processes or hope that if a satisfactory resolution is not reached internally that they have not missed the deadline. The former creates an atmosphere of distrust that often discourages the employer from moving forward, and the latter discourages the employee from seeking internal resolution.

In the area of housing discrimination, the bill simply aligns Maryland and Federal deadlines. This bill differs from legislation the House passed in 2019 by adjusting the time for reporting sexual harassment to comply with recent statutory changes. HB 728 will:

- Extend the time for filing an alleged employment discrimination complaint from 6 months to 300 days;
- Extend a housing discrimination complaint from one year to 18 months; and
- In the case of employment compensation, move the trigger for when the clock to file begins from when the alleged discriminatory action occurred to when the employee first knew, or should have known, about the action.

I hope you will again vote to move this legislation forward.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Terri Hill'.

Terri Hill, M.D.