



February 4, 2021

Dear Chair Smith, Vice-chair Waldstreicher, and Members of Judicial Proceedings Committee:

We are writing in **SUPPORT of SB46**. Any form of “panic” defense is discriminatory and justifies harmful stereotypes, especially surrounding the LGBTQ+ community. This form of defense would not only proclaim LGBTQ+ victim’s lives as somehow less worthy than others, but it would also provide an excuse for violence against them. The ability to use this form of defense promotes discrimination against an already marginalized and threatened community, proven to be even worse for transgender women of color.

Research from the FBI shows that, in 2017, there were a total of 1,249 hate-crimes against the LGBTQ+ community. Statistically, 1 in 5 LGBTQ+ individuals living in the United States will experience some sort of hate-crime in their lifetime. Allowing the “panic” defense will only further put their lives in danger. State law should promote and support equality for everyone. No one’s identity or expression should be accepted as a legitimate threat to those who would do any type of violence. LGBTQ+ victims' lives should be considered just as important in the eyes of the courts.

We urge a **Favorable Report on SB46**. Thank you,

Nicolle Campa She|Her|Hers

Board President

Mark Eckstein He|Him|His

MD Advocacy Co-chair

www.pflagdc.org

Keeping Families Together!

Metro DC PFLAG is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, volunteer organization founded in 1983 and oversees sixteen (16) PFLAG Community Groups across Washington D.C., Maryland and Virginia. As a chapter of PFLAG, we strive to promote the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender persons and their families and friends through support, education, and advocacy to end discrimination and secure equal rights.