



January 15, 2021

Honorable Delegate Luke Clippinger
Chair, House Judiciary Committee
House Office Building, Room 101
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Testimony in SUPPORT of HB306 – Hate Crimes - False Statement to a Law Enforcement Officer

Dear Chair Luke Clippinger and House Judiciary Committee Members:

On behalf of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, I thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of House Bill **306** entitled Hate Crimes - False Statement to a Law Enforcement Officer. CAIR is America's largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization. Its mission is to enhance the understanding of Islam, protect civil rights, promote justice, and empower American Muslims.

Over the course of especially the last year, we have seen a significant uptick in the number of reports of racially motivated 911 calls across the nation that have gained national headlines. My organization has received complaints from community members who feel like that their race or religion has been weaponized by individuals who harbor bias towards them. Some have changed their behavior or the way they dress or appear in public for fear of being targeted in this way.

Needless 911 calls in non-emergency situations are a waste of resources and tax dollars and endanger the lives especially of communities of color who are directly and disproportionately impacted by them. **We support this bill because it sets the tone for accountability, and we believe it will help discourage such behavior in the future. Therefore, we respectfully urge your vote in favor of it.**

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Zainab Chaudry, Pharm.D.
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Council on American-Islamic Relations

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