



Hope And Life Outreach
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March 11, 2024

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
Maryland Senate
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis MD 21401

Re: Senate Bill 1107- Homeless Shelter Licensing Program – Establishment
Cross-filed with HB577

Dear Senator Feldman and Members of the Committee,

I write on behalf of HALO in opposition to the referenced legislation. Halo is a charitable Christian organization located in Salisbury, Maryland which provides shelter, meals, and financial and life skills counseling to the homeless at no cost to the taxpayer. Our shelter has capacity for 150 men, women, and children per day with overnight and laundry facilities. We have been successful in innumerable cases from 2007 to the present in assisting folks in getting back on their feet and becoming productive working citizens supporting themselves and their families.

We are deeply concerned that the legislation, which is framed in broad and general terms assigning regulatory details to State administrative agencies, will impose significant additional compliance costs, in time and money, on HALO that will impair its ability to provide its services to the homeless and people in need in our community. We note that there are at least five(5) other shelters in Wicomico, Somerset, and Worcester Counties (Village of Hope, Joseph House, Christian Shelter, Diakonia, and the Samaritan House) providing the same or similar services to the homeless that would likewise be adversely affected.

HALO is subject now to oversight and compliance requirements of the County Health, Building Code, and Fire Department rules and regulations which address the safety aspects of HALO services and facilities. Comprehensive Inspection and oversight are presently provided for under local law and administered by these agencies ensuring that HALO and other Shelters in our community are operated safely and responsibly.

Sincerely,

Gary Desjardins
Chairman