

**Bill 28-20**  
**Human Rights and Civil Liberties – Discrimination in Public Accommodations –**  
**LGBTQ Bill of Rights**  
**Montgomery County Council**  
**July 28, 2020**

**Position: Support**

Good afternoon Council President Katz and members of the Montgomery County Council. I am Nancy Carr, director of communications for AARP Maryland. As you know, AARP Maryland is one of the largest membership-based organizations in the state, with nearly 900,000 members. I am here today to voice our support for **Bill 28-20 Human Rights and Civil Liberties – Discrimination in Public Accommodations – LGBTQ Bill of Rights**.

AARP estimates that by the year 2030, more Americans will be over the age of 65 than under the age of 18. And three out of four adults age 45 and older who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender say they are concerned about having enough support from family and friends as they age. Many are also worried about how they will be treated in long-term care facilities and want specific LGBTQ services for older adults. The LGBTQ Bill of Rights provides equal treatment under the law by prohibiting discrimination and mistreatment of patients based on their gender identity and HIV status.

According to AARP's 2018 landmark national LGBTQ research study, "Maintaining Dignity: A Survey of LGBT Adults Age 45 and Older":

- 34 percent of LGBT older adults are concerned that they will have to hide their identity in order to have access to suitable housing as they age; and
- 76 percent of respondents are concerned about having adequate family or social supports to rely on as they age.

Although the title of the study refers to "LGBT," transgender and gender expansive adults were among the respondents to the survey. The research also found that based on their life experiences, many LGBTQ elders are worried about their safety in care facilities:

- 67% fear neglect
- 60% anticipate verbal or physical harassment
- 61% expect to face limited access to services
- 52% say they will be forced to hide or deny their identity

Access to safe long-term care is of dire concern for the LGBTQ community. Too many LGBTQ seniors are vulnerable and isolated because they are less likely to have adult children to look out for them. They are also more likely to have lost a significant part of their social network during the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Discrimination at the hands of providers, threatens the very health, financial security, and personal fulfillment of too many 50-plus LGBTQ adults.

AARP Maryland thanks Councilman Evan Glass for his leadership on this issue and we respectfully ask the Council to vote YES on Bill 28-10.

We look forward to working with members of the Council on this and future efforts to ensure that all Marylanders are free to choose how they live as they age, in dignity, safety and comfort. For questions, please contact AARP Maryland Director of Advocacy Tammy Bresnahan at [tbresnahan@aarp.org](mailto:tbresnahan@aarp.org) or by calling 410-302-8451.

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\*The full report, "Maintaining Dignity: A Survey of LGBT Adults Age 45 and Older" (2018) is available online at <https://www.aarp.org/research/topics/life/info-2018/maintaining-dignity-lgbt.html>