



TONI HOLNESS  
PUBLIC POLICY DIRECTOR

**Testimony for the House Health and Government Operations Committee  
March 7, 2018**

**HB 1623 State Policies, Guidelines, and Regulations - Mitigation of Disparate  
Impacts**

**FAVORABLE**

The ACLU of Maryland supports HB 1623, which would require certain departments of state government to develop and implement procedures for identifying the disparate impact of policies, guidelines, and regulations on communities of color, with certain reporting mechanisms.

The importance of using a race equity lens to policymaking cannot be overstated, and yet state government actors everyday enact policies with little or no regard for their impact on communities of color. This is especially the case in the criminal justice system. The analyses required under HB 1623 will provide a more complete demonstration of the criminal justice system's direct consequences on Marylanders of color. For example, it is unfortunately common knowledge that African Americans are over-represented in every dimension of the criminal justice system. The procedures required under HB 1623 would allow state departments to better foresee and prevent further racial disparities, and work toward upending existing disparities.

For the foregoing reasons, we urge a favorable report on HB 1623.

AMERICAN CIVIL  
LIBERTIES UNION  
OF MARYLAND

MAIN OFFICE  
& MAILING ADDRESS  
3600 CLIPPER MILL ROAD  
SUITE 350  
BALTIMORE, MD 21211  
T/410-889-8555  
or 240-274-5295  
F/410-366-7838

[WWW.ACLU-MD.ORG](http://WWW.ACLU-MD.ORG)

COLEMAN BAZELON  
PRESIDENT

SUSAN GOERING  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ANDREW FREEMAN  
GENERAL COUNSEL