
By: **Delegates Rosenberg, Dumais, Menes, and Petzold**

Introduced and read first time: February 2, 2005

Assigned to: Judiciary

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Defamation - Reputation for Chastity - Repeal**

3 FOR the purpose of altering certain statutory provisions concerning slander;
4 repealing certain causes of action for defamatory statements relating to a
5 reputation for chastity; providing for the construction and application of this
6 Act; and generally relating to defamation.

7 BY repealing

8 Article - Courts and Judicial Proceedings

9 Section 3-501 and 3-502

10 Annotated Code of Maryland

11 (2002 Replacement Volume and 2004 Supplement)

12 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
13 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

14 **Article - Courts and Judicial Proceedings**

15 3-501.

16 Any word spoken falsely and maliciously and likely to injure a [woman's]
17 PERSON'S character or reputation for chastity is slander.

18 [3-502.

19 (a) A single or married woman whose character or reputation for chastity is
20 defamed by any person may maintain an action against that person.

21 (b) The husband may maintain an action of slander against any person for
22 words spoken falsely and maliciously about his wife for her character or reputation
23 for chastity before or during the marriage.]

24 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act may not be
25 construed to affect any common law cause of action for defamation.

1 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall be
2 construed to apply only prospectively and may not be applied or interpreted to have
3 any effect on or application to any cause of action arising before the effective date of
4 this Act.

5 SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
6 October 1, 2005.