

---

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

Introduced and read first time: February 2, 2005

Assigned to: Judiciary

---

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

House action: Adopted

Read second time: March 1, 2005

---

CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

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 and reenacting, with amendments,

8 Article - Courts and Judicial Proceedings

9 Section 3-501

10 Annotated Code of Maryland

11 (2002 Replacement Volume and 2004 Supplement)

12 BY repealing

13 Article - Courts and Judicial Proceedings

14 Section ~~3-501~~ and 3-502

15 Annotated Code of Maryland

16 (2002 Replacement Volume and 2004 Supplement)

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

1

**Article - Courts and Judicial Proceedings**

2 3-501.

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

5 [3-502.

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

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

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

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

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