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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
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**Testimony in Support of HB460- Department of Human Services - Child Abuse
Prevention - Online Course**

Chairman Clippinger, Vice-Chair Atterbeary and Members of the Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of HB460 which would require the Department of Human Services to make available online a free course on child abuse prevention, identification and reporting.

As many on the committee are aware, mandatory reporters of child abuse include health care practitioners, police officers, educators, and human service workers who are acting in a professional capacity and who have reason to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect. Although they must notify a law enforcement agency or local department of social services if they suspect abuse or neglect, only certain mandatory reporters are required by law to take trainings on how to identify, prevent and report suspected abuse.

By providing a free, easily accessible certification course on DHS' website, we can ensure that all youth-serving individuals like ballet and karate instructors, Sunday school teachers, preschool teachers and others have the tools to identify the signs of abuse, and know how to prevent and report it to the appropriate entity.

I am grateful to DHS for their support for this effort, and to the many committee colleagues and others throughout our chamber who have signed on as cosponsors.

I respectfully request a favorable report of HB460. Thank you.