

BILL NO: House Bill 1009
TITLE: Adjudicatory Hearings - Attorney Security Passes for Attorneys in Good Standing
COMMITTEE: Judiciary
HEARING DATE: February 26, 2020
POSITION: **SUPPORT**

House Bill 1009 would requires the judiciary to design and implement a system of attorney identification for entering the courthouses around the state. The Women's Law Center supports House Bill 1009 because our staff attorneys go to a variety of courthouses, sometimes in a single day, and should be afforded the status as officers of the court of being able to avoid the security checks required by many courthouses.

For decades, the Maryland State Bar Association (MSBA) has provided the opportunity for barred lawyers to apply for an identification card issued by the MSBA. Until recent years, this ID card allowed lawyers to by-pass the sometimes long security lines for people entering courthouses. Slowly, many of the different courthouses and jurisdictions removed this privilege and now many require lawyers to stand in line to wait to go through metal detectors and otherwise be screened for security purposes. HB 1009 simply seeks to create a uniform process so that lawyers in good standing, who often are being paid by the hour, and often have multiple hearings in the same or different courthouses, are able to by-pass this tedious security process. As lawyers, we are officers the court and should be able to get into courthouses expeditiously.

Therefore, the Women's Law Center of Maryland, Inc. urges a favorable report on House Bill 1009.

The Women's Law Center of Maryland is a private, non-profit, membership organization that serves as a leading voice for justice and fairness for women. It advocates for the rights of women through legal assistance to individuals and strategic initiatives to achieve systemic change. The Women's Law Center operates two hotlines, Protection Order Advocacy and Representation Projects in Baltimore City, Baltimore County and Carroll County and the Multi-Ethnic Domestic Violence Project.