



Working to end sexual violence in Maryland

P.O. Box 8782
Silver Spring, MD 20907
Phone: 301-565-2277
Fax: 301-565-3619

For more information contact:
Lisae C. Jordan, Esquire
443-995-5544
www.mcasa.org

Testimony Supporting House Bill 1204
Lisae C. Jordan, Executive Director & Counsel
February 26, 2020

The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MCASA) is a non-profit membership organization that includes the State's seventeen rape crisis centers, law enforcement, mental health and health care providers, attorneys, educators, survivors of sexual violence and other concerned individuals. MCASA includes the Sexual Assault Legal Institute (SALI) which provides direct legal services for survivors across Maryland. We urge the Ways & Means Committee to report favorably on House Bill 1204.

House Bill 1204 – Anti-Discrimination Protections for All Students

The Inclusive Schools Act codifies anti-discrimination protections for all students, Pre-K-12 who are enrolled in Maryland's public schools and in schools receiving public funding. It also prohibits retaliation against a student, parent, or guardian who files a complaint of discrimination.

Sexual assault and sexual harassment are a type of discrimination based on sex. All too often, these issues are not viewed as discrimination when they occur in high schools or involve even younger students. As of August 30, 2019, 56.4% of schools (elementary-secondary and post-secondary) under investigation by the Office for Civil Rights for Title IX Sexual Harassment violations are K-12 schools. Additionally, 32.5% of schools (elementary-secondary and post-secondary) under investigation by the Officer for Civil Rights for Title IX Sexual Violence violations are K-12 schools.

Sexual harassment and sexual violence violations persist in the K-12 context because the procedures and policies currently implemented in schools are failing students. House Bill 1204 would help give the State of Maryland the tools it needs to respond to sexual assault and sexual harassment in our schools.

**The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault urges the
Ways & Means Committee to
report favorably on House Bill 1204**