

Copy of SB 484 Letter of Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Baranauskas, Anthony

Position: FAV



GOVERNOR'S COORDINATING OFFICES

Community Initiatives · Service & Volunteerism · Performance Improvement
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Banneker-Douglass Museum · Volunteer Maryland · Deaf & Hard of Hearing

FROM THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF CRIME PREVENTION, YOUTH, AND VICTIM SERVICES

February 8, 2021

Chair Smith and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee
Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Senate Bill 484: Criminal Procedure – Victims of Crime – Private Room

POSITION: Support

Dear Chair Clippinger and Members of the Committee,

The Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services ("Office") is providing this letter of support for SB 484: Criminal Procedure – Victims of Crime – Private Room.

This legislation will require the State Board of Victim Services to develop a poster to notify victims of the right to request a private room in a law enforcement agency to report crimes under Title 3 of the Criminal Law Article. Law enforcement entities would be required to display these posters, and provide, on request, a private room to a victim to report such crimes.

The State Board of Victim Services is under the purview of the Office. The Board has 22 members representing crime victims, service providers, and criminal justice related agencies. The mission of the Board is to ensure that all crime victims in the State receive justice and are treated with dignity and compassion through comprehensive victim services.

The Board currently develops pamphlets to notify victims of certain rights, services, and procedures provided under Article 47 of the Maryland Declaration of Rights or State law, how to request information regarding an unsolved case, and that an offender be placed on electronic monitoring or electronic monitoring stay-away alert technology. The Board also develops a

notification request form through which a victim or victim's representative may request to be notified of certain hearings and events related to their case.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "V. Glenn Fueston, Jr.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

V. Glenn Fueston, Jr.
Executive Director
Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services

For all inquiries, please contact
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SB484 MSBVS Letter of Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Baranauskas, Anthony

Position: FAV



Maryland State Board of Victim Services

100 Community Place, Crownsville, MD 21032

Steven J. Kelly, Esq.
Chair

February 10, 2021

Chairman William C. Smith, Jr., and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SENATE BILL 484 - Criminal Procedure - Victims of Crime - Private Room
POSITION: SUPPORT

Dear Chairman Smith and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

The Maryland State Board of Victim Services supports Senate Bill 484, which requires the Board to develop a poster to notify a victim of the right to request a private room in a law enforcement agency when reporting a crime, other than a homicide, that involves injury to a person. The bill requires that law enforcement display the poster and provide a private room to a victim upon request. Victims often have a fear of reporting to law enforcement, and Senate Bill 484 allows them to do so in a private and confidential manner.

Senate Bill 484 aligns with the mission of the Maryland State Board of Victim Services, which is to ensure crime victims in Maryland receive justice and are treated with dignity and compassion through comprehensive victim services.

For these reasons, the Maryland State Board of Victim Services urges a favorable report on Senate Bill 484.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "SJK", followed by a horizontal line.

Steven J. Kelly, Esq.
Chair

SB484_FAV_Hettleman.pdf

Uploaded by: Hettleman, Shelly

Position: FAV



The Senate of Maryland
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

TESTIMONY OF SENATOR SHELLY HETTLEMAN
SB 484 – Criminal Procedure -Victims of Crime – Private Room

I introduced this bill in response to an incident that happened to a young Baltimore County resident, who you will hear from today. She is going to testify in support of this bill because she does not want others to have to go through what she experienced. She was put in a very uncomfortable situation when she had to make a police report about an embarrassing incident that occurred in her place of work. The Cockeysville Police Department asked her to make her statement in an open, public lobby with multiple people present. Due to the sensitive nature of her report, this made her feel re-victimized, embarrassed, and that her privacy had been violated. Not only once, but three times, she was forced to explain her story in a room full of people whom she didn't know. At a vulnerable time, when law enforcement should be supporting victims, she was put in an uncomfortable position with no other options offered.

This bill will require law enforcement agencies to give a private area or room, upon request, for victims to talk about sensitive subjects. The bill would also require clear signage to indicate that such a space could be made available. Victims should be able to share their stories and situations in a private area that allows them to feel comfortable and able to express their truth. This is especially important for victims of sexual assault or rape. Hospitals, trauma centers, and other programs have already established these types of privacy protocols for sexual assault survivors as part of best practices.

This bill has been endorsed by the bipartisan Women's Caucus.

This straightforward legislation will ensure that crime victims have safe and secure locations, in a supportive environment that is conducive to sharing sensitive, private information. We believe Maryland's victims of crime deserve no less. I urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 484. Thank you.

Private room - testimony - senate - 2021.pdf

Uploaded by: Jordan, Lisae C

Position: FAV



Working to end sexual violence in Maryland

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

Testimony Supporting Senate Bill 484
Lisae C. Jordan, Executive Director & Counsel
February 10, 2021

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), a statewide legal services provider for survivors of sexual assault. MCASA represents the unified voice and combined energy of all of its members working to eliminate sexual violence. We urge the Judicial Proceedings Committee to report favorably on Senate Bill 484.

Senate Bill 484 – Reporting Crimes – Privacy and Sexual Assault

This bill requires that law enforcement provide victims of crimes against the person be provided with a private place to report the crime. Crimes against the person include sexual crimes in Title 3, subtitle 3, as well as sexual abuse of a minor, sexual abuse of vulnerable adults, sex trafficking, and many domestic violence cases.

This bill was prompted by the experience of a young woman who had been sexually assaulted. She went to the police station and was asked to shout the details of her experience to an officer through glass, in a public area, and in front of others. She left. She later returned with her parents and, once again, had to shout out about her experience. MCASA appreciates the courage and determination of this young survivor. We also hope that no other survivor has to face these particular challenges.

Sexual assault remains one of the most underreported crimes. Survivors often feel ashamed of what happened, are (correctly) fearful of being judged, and reluctant to discuss sexual violence. It is unfortunate that SB484 had to be introduced and that law enforcement did not have the sensitivity to provide crime victims with a private place to report these crimes. Senate Bill 484 will ensure this happens in the future.

**The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault urges the
Judicial Proceedings Committee to
report favorably on Senate Bill 484**

SB484 Michelle Lee testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Lee, Michelle

Position: FAV



SUPPORT SB484

February 10, 2021

Senator William C. Smith, Jr.
Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Support for SB484 Criminal Procedure - Victims of Crime - Private Room

Good afternoon Senator Smith and members of the Judicial Proceedings committee. My name is Michelle Lee, and I am the Victim Witness Advocacy Coordinator for the Office of The State's Attorney for Baltimore City. I am before you today in support of Senate Bill 484.

As you know, this bill requires the State Board of Victim Services to develop a poster to notify victims of the right to request a private room in a law enforcement agency or unit to report crimes. Law Enforcement agencies would be required to display the poster and provide, on request, a private room to a victim to report information related to crimes in which they were victimized. This is so important because oftentimes, victims can be re-victimized when they are forced to share intimate details of their victimization in front of passerby's and strangers. It's difficult enough for victims to have to recount the details of the crimes against them, but having supported victims of sexual assaults and hate crimes, it is even more difficult to share intimate details in an open space where there are possible triggers to them. In escorting a victim of sexual assault she was asked very intimate details of her victimization, and there was no consideration given for the fact that there were people walking by and some who seemed to linger so that they could hear her answers. With this same victim, she shut down because she saw someone who reminded her of the person who assaulted her earlier in the day. Having a private room to obtain the specific details of her assault would have been very helpful, and the detective would have gotten more immediate information from her, instead of having to reschedule the interview because the victim immediately shut down. In another incident, when accompanying a transgendered assault victim, they became very irritated when it became abundantly clear that their interview was being treated by some, as if it were some form entertainment. As the victim answered questions, giggles and inappropriate comments could be heard in the background. The victim became irate shut down and at one point indicated that they no longer wanted to go through with reporting the crime. Finally, while escorting an assault victim who was eager to share information about his assault and some other things that were happening in his neighborhood, we were caught off guard when he suddenly yelled that he was not a snitch and that the police couldn't make him talk. He had to be removed from the public area into a private room because he was so angry and unruly. It turns out that he saw someone from his neighborhood in the hallway, and he was afraid that they would tell everyone that he was cooperating with the police.

STATE'S ATTORNEY
Marilyn J. Mosby



OFFICE of the STATE'S ATTORNEY for BALTIMORE CITY
120 East Baltimore Street | Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Having posted signage in the units, just in case private room accommodations are not offered to the victims, they can read the signs and know that they have this right. As advocates, we would certainly keep victims in the loop and aware of their rights, but there are times where there may not be an advocate with victims when they report crime. Knowledge is power, and knowing that they have the right to privacy and to be interviewed in a safe space outside of the hearing and view of others should be helpful for victims as well as for the detectives who are conducting the interviews.

It is for these reasons that I respectfully ask you to vote in support of SB484.

Sincerely,

Michelle Lee

HB0484 MD NARAL SUPPORT.pdf

Uploaded by: Philip, Diana

Position: FAV



SB0484 - Criminal Procedure - Victims of Crime - Private Room

Presented to the Hon. Will Smith and Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
February 10, 2021 1:00 p.m.

POSITION: SUPPORT

NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland urges the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee to issue **a favorable report on SB0484 - Criminal Procedure - Victims of Crime - Private Room**, sponsored by Senator Shelly Hettleman.

Our organization is an advocate for reproductive health, rights, and justice. Victims of sexual assault, traumatized by the violation of one's bodily autonomy, often fear losing control over any sense of privacy when seeking information or assistance from local enforcement. Current practices by Maryland law enforcement do not guarantee that crime victims have the right to request private spaces to interact with their officers, nor are their agencies required to display information regarding the right to request access to such space onsite.

According to a study conducted by the National Domestic Violence Hotline,¹ victims often cite the fear of losing their privacy as a reason for failing to call or involve police after experiencing sexual crimes. Without the opportunity to request a private and safe environment for such interactions, victims may feel pressured to avoid showing emotion, or may feel a lack of respect and/or empathy from officers to disclose all pertinent information. Lack of safety and privacy may exacerbate trauma responses when describing or re-living certain details of the crimes. Law enforcement should be required to support victims, avoid re-traumatization where possible, and provide opportunities to protect the mental health of survivors willing to come forward.

SB0484 would help protect victims of crime by requiring law enforcement to display a poster informing about their right to request a private room, and to provide that room when requested. We support advocates calling for a clear and visual commitment by law enforcement officers willing and ready to assist survivors with the safety and security they need to find justice. SB0484 moves us a step forward in improving the rights of sexual assault survivors in Maryland. For these reasons, NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland **urges a favorable committee report on SB0484**. Thank you for your time and consideration.

¹ National Domestic Violence Hotline, Who Will Help Me? Domestic Violence Survivors Speak Out About Law Enforcement Responses. Washington, DC (2015). <http://www.thehotline.org/resources/law-enforcement-responses>

SB 484 - Criminal Procedure - Victims of Crime - P

Uploaded by: Ruth, Laurence

Position: FAV

BILL NO: Senate Bill 484
TITLE: Criminal Procedure - Victims of Crime - Private Room
COMMITTEE: Judicial Proceedings
HEARING DATE: February 10, 2021
POSITION: **SUPPORT**

Senate Bill 484 would require the State Board of Victim Services to develop a poster to notify a victim of the right to request a certain private room, and to provide that private room upon request, in a law enforcement agency when reporting any crime under Title 3 of the Criminal Law Article. The Women's Law Center supports HB 484 because it is important to offer victims a safe place to make reports that can be of a sensitive nature.

The Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services houses the State Board of Victim Services. HB 484 would require that Board to develop a poster advising victims of any crime under Title 3 of the Criminal Law Article of their right to make report in a private setting. Further, it would require law enforcement, as defined in the Public Safety Article, Section 3-201 to post the notice and to provide the private room upon request.

Title 3 of the Criminal Code consists of "other crimes against the person." Included are sexual crimes, kidnapping, abuse and other offensive conduct, stalking and harassment, and crimes against privacy. Relating the facts underlying the charge can be traumatizing, sensitive and difficult to talk about. Victims should be allowed to be in a private setting when reporting these crimes to at least attempt to minimize trauma during the telling of the facts. HB 484 is a way to offer some assistance to these victims.

Therefore, the Women's Law Center of Maryland, Inc. urges a favorable report on Senate Bill 484.

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 WLC has Protection Order Projects in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Carroll County and statewide projects for victims of crime.

PDF 1.pdf

Uploaded by: Sayan, Isabella

Position: FAV

On August 25, 2019, I went to the Cockeyville police precinct with my father to report an incident that occurred at the restaurant where I worked. An adult co-worker made an inappropriate advance to me and when I reported it to management, they were unconcerned. The police station there has a lobby where the officers sit behind a glass wall. My father explained to the officer why we were there. The officer then asked me to relay what happened to me, in the public lobby. What happened to me was very embarrassing and it was made even more so by not being able to tell the (male) officer my story in private. I returned to the police station the next day with my mother, and we experienced the same thing. I was made to give my explanation in the public lobby, to another male officer. This caused me to feel very uncomfortable again, and overall felt like an experience that anyone could easily walk in on. It was not until my mother consulted an attorney, who had also been a police officer, that she was able to demand we be taken into a private room for me to explain what happened. It's my feeling that anyone coming to a police station to report a crime like assault, which may be sensitive or embarrassing for them, should have the option to do so in a private room, away from the public eye.

pdf 2.pdf

Uploaded by: Sayan, Isabella

Position: FAV

On August 25, 2019, my husband took our daughter to the Cockeyville Police Station to file a police report. I was appalled to find out that she was made to tell her story, not in a room face-to-face with an officer, but in the public lobby of the police station. The lobby in that building is similar to a bank lobby, with an open space and officers behind glass and no privacy whatsoever from anyone who entered the building. It's also necessary to speak loudly, because of the space and the glass. The questions my daughter was asked were personal and the experience she had to describe was embarrassing enough, without being asked to "speak up" and repeat herself to the officer.

In the end, she and I returned to the police station two more times. Each time, she was made to retell her experience right in the public lobby, with whoever was there for whatever reason, listening. As a mother, this was infuriating and unacceptable. My daughter was unprotected. She was brave enough to walk into the police station and tell them what happened to her, yet she was not given the dignity and safety of being able to tell her story in private. She was 15 and this was a terribly embarrassing and humiliating experience for her. And as her mother, I was helpless, as this was the "way it is done."

Victims who enter a police station to tell their stories, to file charges, and to seek guidance and protection, should have the option to tell their stories to an officer in a private, safe space.

pdf 2.pdf

Uploaded by: Sayan, Kristen

Position: FAV

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Victims who enter a police station to tell their stories, to file charges, and to seek guidance and protection, should have the option to tell their stories to an officer in a private, safe space.

SB484_MNADV_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Shapiro, Melanie

Position: FAV



BILL NO: Senate Bill 484
TITLE: Criminal Procedure - Victims of Crime - Private Room
COMMITTEE: Judicial Proceedings
HEARING DATE: February 10, 2021
POSITION: **SUPPORT**

The Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV) is the state domestic violence coalition that brings together victim service providers, allied professionals, and concerned individuals for the common purpose of reducing intimate partner and family violence and its harmful effects on our citizens. **MNADV urges the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee to issue a favorable report on SB 484.**

Senate Bill 484 requires the State Board of Victim Services to create a poster that law enforcement agencies must post to inform victims of their right to request a private room when reporting information regarding crimes found in Title 3 of the Criminal Law Article. The types of crimes found in Title 3 of the Criminal Law Article, entitled Other Crimes Against the Person, include assault, rape, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking.

Domestic violence remains one of the most underreported crimes with almost 600,000 unreported incidents of nonfatal domestic violence victimizations occurring each year between 2006-2015.¹ It takes a tremendous amount of courage for a survivor of domestic violence or any crime to one's person, to walk into a law enforcement agency and report it. Informing victims that they have the right to report a crime and share the personal details of their victimization in a private room is victim-centered and a practice and policy that Maryland and law enforcement agencies should embrace.

For the above stated reasons, the **Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence urges a favorable report on SB 484.**

¹ Brian A. Reaves, Ph.D., *Bureau of Justice Statistics, Police Response To Domestic Violence, 2006-2015, 2017*, https://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=5907&utm_source=juststats&utm_medium=email&utm_content=prdv0615_report_detail_page&utm_campaign=prdv0615&ed2f26df2d9c416fbddddd2330a778c6=lohfkfgkz-lktztdoo