



Working to end sexual violence in Maryland

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Testimony Supporting Senate Bill 608
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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 608.

Senate Bill 608 – Maryland Police Training & Standards Commission

This bill strengthens the authority and responsibility of the Police Training and Standards Commission. Critically, it maintains current requirements and mandates that police receive entrance level training and training every three years on:

(I)THE CRIMINAL LAWS CONCERNING RAPE AND SEXUAL OFFENSES, INCLUDING THE SEXUALABUSE AND EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN AND RELATED EVIDENTIARY PROCEDURES;

(II)THE CRIMINAL LAWS CONCERNING HUMAN TRAFFICKING, INCLUDING SERVICES AND SUPPORT AVAILABLE TO VICTIMS AND THE RIGHTS AND APPROPRIATE TREATMENT OF VICTIMS;

(III)THE CONTACT WITH AND TREATMENT OF VICTIMS OF CRIMES AND DELINQUENT ACTS;

(IV)THE NOTICES, SERVICES, SUPPORT, AND RIGHTS AVAILABLE TO VICTIMS AND VICTIMS'REPRESENTATIVES UNDER STATE LAW;

MCASA also fully supports and urges enactment of mandated training in the recognition and prevention of discrimination. This is critical for fair and just application of criminal laws, including laws regarding sexual violence. Sexual violence disproportionately affects women: 91% of the victims of rape and sexual assault are female, and 9% are male. (Rennison, C. A. (2002). Rape and sexual assault: Reporting to police and medical attention, 1992-2000 [NCJ 194530]. Retrieved from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics). Sexual violence and trafficking also disproportionately affect Black women. The US Department of Justice found that African American girls and women 12 years and older experienced higher rates of rape and sexual assault than White, Asian, and Latina girls and women from 2005-2010. U.S. DOJ Bureau of Justice Statistics, "Female Victims of Sexual Violence, 1994-2010," 201. 40% of confirmed sex trafficking survivors in the U.S. are Black. Banks, Duren and Kyckelhahn, Tracey, " Characteristics of Suspected Human Trafficking Incidents, 2008-2010", The Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2011. Our law enforcement officers must have the training and tools to recognize and combat the discrimination and racism that contributes to these crimes.

**The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault urges the
Judicial Proceedings Committee to
report favorably on Senate Bill 608**