

TESTIMONY FOR HB0174

**Criminal Procedure - Victims of Sexually Assaultive Behavior**

**Bill Sponsor:** Delegate Simpson

**Committee:** Judiciary

**Organization Submitting:** Lower Shore Progressive Caucus

**Person Submitting:** Jared Schablein, Chair

**Position:** FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB00174 on behalf of the Lower Shore Progressive Caucus. The Caucus is a political and activist organization on the Eastern Shore, unaffiliated with any political party, committed to empowering working people by building a Progressive movement on the Lower Eastern Shore.

The feeling that you're no longer in control of your life is one of the most distressing and devastating elements of victimhood. Decisions are taken from you and you are left to suffer their consequences.

After you have had the courage to come forward and the State's Attorney chooses not to charge your abuser, you should at least be able to understand their decision. Someone should have to face you to help you understand why the decision was made.

To the victim, this is simply acceptable conduct. Although it shouldn't, the victim and their rights are frequently ignored in our society. It would be so easy to at least give the victim the courtesy of being heard by an Assistant State's Attorney.

It is for these reasons the Lower Shore Progressive Caucus supports this bill and recommends a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.