



BILL NO: House Bill 129
TITLE: Courts - Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation
COMMITTEE: Judiciary
HEARING DATE: January 25, 2023
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 Judiciary Committee to issue a favorable report on HB 129.**

Domestic violence abusers use countless forms of manipulation and abuse against their victims including the court system. Abusers use the court system as a way to maintain power and control over their victims bringing their victims into court countless times or threatening them with lawsuits if they seek protective orders. Victims should not fear seeking safety such as in the form of a protective out of fear of legal retaliation from their abuser. While not all of these retaliatory suits will qualify as SLAPP suits, some will, and HB 129 will help discourage this type of litigation abuse and allow victims access to justice.

For the above stated reasons, the **Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence urges a favorable report on HB 129.**