

SB632.pdf

Uploaded by: Allison Weyant

Position: FAV

2/15/2024

To whom it may concern:

We are writing in support of our neighbors in this bill's passing. Living in a family neighborhood, and having young children ourselves, we understand the importance of privacy and safety where we live. We believe that our neighbors have taken a kind, appropriate, and justified approach in resolving their personal security dispute without external involvement. That being said, in the case of any escalation, and for further peace of mind, we feel that the execution of a peace order is warranted in certain occasions and can be useful for a family's wellbeing. We appreciate our neighbors, the Leatherman's, and Senator Corderman's approach in support of SB632. We look forward to this legislation coming to fruition.

Sincerely,

Brian and Allison Weyant

support letter for Bill 632.pdf

Uploaded by: Bette Shifler

Position: FAV

We would like to add our support for Senate Bill 632. We feel that a family should feel safe from a neighbor watching and taping the family, including minor children, on their own property. You should have a reasonable expectation of privacy at your own residence and back yard. When one or more cameras are used to solely harass and stalk neighbors, this is not for security purposes.

Our granddaughters have feared being in their own yard and speaking freely because they are being listened to by a neighbor, who is an adult male. In this particular case, this was a new house and a new neighbor. It was very creepy that he wanted to watch all the neighbors. By his own admission, he has 12 cameras, and it is his right to watch all the neighbors, he is entitled to do this.

I understand, we have a right to protect and secure our property, we also have cameras on our property, but we don't move them to watch our neighbors. He not only moved them many times but has also tried to go over the boards that were put in place to block his view. This seems more like harassment and stalking than protection of his property.

Thank you for trying to put something in place to allow families to feel safe and secure in their own back yards.

Ronald and Bette Jo Shifler

20017 Beaver Creek Rd

Hagerstown, MD 21740

301-739-3493

Statement for HB 632.pdf

Uploaded by: Hannah Leatherman

Position: FAV

First of all, thank you for allowing us to speak today. We are in favor of SB632 going into law because we have been dealing with a neighbor who has had video surveillance on our property now for over a year with multiple cameras. After talking to police, we found that we have no recourse against this intrusion.

Our neighbor built a house on the property that backs our small barn where our two children house their 4-H animals. Shortly after he moved in, he placed 3 cameras in a line of trees about 5 feet off our property line facing us and pointed directly and deliberately towards our barn. He is able to view them and see our children at the barn as well as possibly hear audio. One camera we know has motion detection because we see a blue light flash when we pass by within range. It was obvious these cameras were placed for the sole reason of surveilling us.

We confronted our neighbor about the cameras but he did not give us any assurance that they would be coming down. My husband and I decided our best course of action was to block the view of the cameras with plywood and screen material. Our neighbor responded by moving the cameras to see around our blockade forcing us to add more screening. We felt like he was harassing us and our children, yet there was nothing we could do. Now we no longer send our children to the barn with their animals after dark and we watch them closely during the day.

In talking with others about our issue, we found that we are not alone in dealing with similar situations. These people also found they had no legal recourse. We understand that almost everyone has security cameras these days and sometimes they may see a piece of a neighbor's property. There is a clear difference between that and using the cameras for intentional surveillance against a neighbor. Our story is just one example of why SB632 needs to be put into law.

Thank you for your time.

SB0632.pdf

Uploaded by: Holly Leatherman

Position: FAV

SB0632

I would like to publicly acknowledge my support for SB0632. I feel everyone is entitled to privacy in their own backyards. No one should be made to feel like they are being stalked or under surveillance from neighbors on their own private property. That is harassment. Now that the use of security cameras is common, the laws need to catch up to the technology being used. My neighbors should have no right to surveil or monitor my private property. Furthermore, Maryland is a two-party consent state, making audio recording without permission illegal. Why is it lawful to video record your neighbors without their permission? Please pass SB0632 to allow everyone to enjoy the privacy of their own homes and backyards. Thank you!

SB 632 Presentation for Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Paul Corderman

Position: FAV













SB 632 Sen Corderman Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Paul Corderman

Position: FAV

PAUL D. CORDERMAN
Legislative District 2
Frederick and Washington Counties

Budget and Taxation Committee

Subcommittees

Capital Budget

Education, Business and Administration



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 16, 2024

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
Chair Will Smith
Vice Chair Jeff Waldstreicher
2 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill SB 632 – Peace Orders – Visual Surveillance

Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, & Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to present SB 632 Peace Orders – Visual Surveillance.

During the Spring of 2023, our office was contacted by a constituent with concerns regarding a disturbing pattern of behavior being exhibited by their neighbor who had moved in behind them approximately four months earlier in December of 2022. This neighbor has placed 12+ Ring cameras along his property line, some of which are directed towards the constituent's backyard where their two minor-aged daughters care for their farm animals in and near their barn – a place where a reasonable expectation of privacy exists.

Per the local Sheriff Department's instructions, the constituent approached the neighbor to inquire why there were so many cameras pointed directly towards where their young children play. His response was that he had a right to do so. When the constituent attempted to file a harassment or peace order through the Sheriff's Department, they were informed that due to current law and until this man actually harmed the children, no legal recourse could be taken. Given this information, the constituent family attempted to block their neighbor's camera view by installing metal poles with wooden boards attached to the edge of their property line. I have included photos of this on record for the Committee's review. Each time the family attempted to block the neighbor's camera view, he moved his cameras – raising them so that he could still view their backyard and their children. We understand that property owners have a right to place cameras on their property. However, at the same time, this family has the right to a reasonable expectation of privacy. This aggressive and intrusive behavior is unwarranted.

SB 632 authorizes a person to petition for a peace order and be heard in court on the grounds that the respondent is conducting unwanted visual surveillance of an area of a residence where they have a reasonable expectation of privacy. If the petitioner meets their burden in court, the judge would then be able to issue an order to the respondent ordering them to refrain from committing the acts complained of in the petition.

Thank you for your consideration as I respectfully ask for a favorable report on SB 632.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul D. Corderman".

Paul D. Corderman
District 2 – Washington & Frederick Counties

sb632.pdf

Uploaded by: Linda Miller

Position: UNF

**MARYLAND JUDICIAL CONFERENCE
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

Hon. Matthew J. Fader
Chief Justice

187 Harry S. Truman Parkway
Annapolis, MD 21401

MEMORANDUM

TO: Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
FROM: Legislative Committee
Suzanne D. Pelz, Esq.
410-260-1523
RE: Senate Bill 632
Peace Orders – Visual Surveillance
DATE: January 31, 2024
(2/16)

COMMENT PAPER

The Judiciary respects the separation of powers doctrine and acknowledges that the legislature is the policy-making branch. As such, the Judiciary has no position on the policy aims of this legislation and defers to the legislative branch on such matters.

The Judiciary only writes to point out that the bill’s language, i.e., “areas of the petitioner’s residence where the petitioner has a reasonable expectation of privacy,” is broad and may be difficult to apply. Additionally, it should be noted that § 3-1505(d) specifically limits the relief that the court may grant and, to the extent that this new language is designed to address visual surveillance through the use of cameras, the Court may not have the statutory authority to address that concern.

cc. Hon. Paul Corderman
Judicial Council
Legislative Committee
Kelley O’Connor