

OFFICE OF THE STATE'S ATTORNEY

JAYMI STERLING
STATE'S ATTORNEY



CIRCUIT COURT
DIVISION

ST. MARY'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

DATE: January 19, 2024

BILL NUMBER: HB 99

POSITION: Favorable

The St. Mary's County State's Attorney's Office supports HB 99.

HB 99 seeks to amend Criminal Law Article 3-324; Sexual Solicitation of a Minor, to include the crime of Criminal Law Article 11-207; Child Pornography, as a criminal act of soliciting a minor.

As a prosecutor for over 20 years, there have been many cases, especially in the last 10 years with advances in technology and the progression of social media, in which a person solicits the minor to engage in child pornography. Amending 3-324 to include CL 11-207 Child Pornography, directly and clearly demonstrates the intent to protect children against all types of abuse. Soliciting children to send photographs, videos, images of themselves engaged in sexual conduct should be aligned with the other criminal law violations which protect children from sexual abuse already in effect in CL 3-324.

Amending CL 3-324, also gives Law Enforcement an additional tool to be proactive in protecting children before any sexual abuse can occur. Protecting children from the harm of sexual abuse should be a priority for all. By including CL 11-207 in the amendment to CL 3-324, the goal would be allowing Law Enforcement to catch sexual predators targeting children prior to any abuse occurring to an actual child. Law Enforcement will now be able to target those predators on social media, or those using our advances in technology (encryptions) as a predatory means to abuse children once CL 3-324 is amended to include CL 11-207.

Sarah Proctor

Sarah F Proctor
Chief of Special Victims Unit
For St. Mary's County State's Attorney Office

