
**By: Delegate Taylor and Chairman, Judiciary Committee (Family Violence Council),
and Delegates Dewberry, Hurson, Arnick, Busch, Curran, Harrison, Hixson, Kopp,
Menes, Owings, and Rawlings**

Requested: October 28, 1996

Introduced and read first time: January 8, 1997

Assigned to: Judiciary

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Evidence - Assault Trials - Spousal Privilege - Record of Assertion**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring that the clerk of the court make and maintain a separate
4 record of the refusal of certain witnesses to testify in certain assault trials under
5 certain circumstances; specifying the contents of the record; providing that the
6 record is not subject to expungement; and generally relating to the privilege of the
7 spouse of a person on trial for certain crimes to refuse to testify.

8 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
9 Article - Courts and Judicial Proceedings
10 Section 9-106
11 Annotated Code of Maryland
12 (1995 Replacement Volume and 1996 Supplement)

13 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
14 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

15 **Article - Courts and Judicial Proceedings**

16 9-106.

17 (A) The spouse of a person on trial for a crime may not be compelled to testify as
18 an adverse witness unless the charge involves:

19 (1) The abuse of a child under 18; or

20 (2) Assault in any degree in which the spouse is a victim if:

21 (i) The person on trial was previously charged with assault in any
22 degree or assault and battery of the spouse;

23 (ii) The spouse was sworn to testify at the previous trial; and

24 (iii) The spouse refused to testify at the previous trial on the basis of
25 the provisions of this section.

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1 (B) (1) IF THE SPOUSE OF A PERSON ON TRIAL FOR ASSAULT IN ANY
2 DEGREE IN WHICH THE SPOUSE WAS A VICTIM IS SWORN TO TESTIFY AT THE TRIAL
3 AND REFUSES TO TESTIFY ON THE BASIS OF THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION, THE
4 CLERK OF THE COURT SHALL MAKE AND MAINTAIN A SEPARATE RECORD OF THAT
5 REFUSAL.

6 (2) THE RECORD SHALL INCLUDE THE DEFENDANT'S NAME, THE
7 SPOUSE'S NAME, THE CASE FILE NUMBER, A COPY OF THE CHARGING DOCUMENT,
8 AND THE DATE OF THE TRIAL IN WHICH THE SPOUSE REFUSED TO TESTIFY.

9 (3) THE RECORD IS NOT SUBJECT TO EXPUNGEMENT UNDER ARTICLE
10 27, §§ 735 THROUGH 741 OF THE CODE.

11 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
12 October 1, 1997.