

# HOUSE BILL 465

D3  
HB 629/25 – JUD

6lr1804  
CF SB 295

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By: **Delegates Embry, Bagnall, Barnes, Boyce, Charkoudian, Conaway, Crutchfield, Fair, Feldmark, Fennell, Forbes, Guyton, Ivey, D. Jones, Kaufman, Lopez, McComas, Phillips, Schmidt, Shetty, Simmons, Simpson, Smith, Spiegel, Stinnett, Taylor, Terrasa, Tomlinson, White Holland, Williams, Wolek, and Woods**

Introduced and read first time: January 23, 2026

Assigned to: Judiciary

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Civil Actions – Immunity – Disclosure of Allegations of Sexually Assaultive**  
3 **Behavior**  
4 **(Stop Silencing Survivors Act)**

5 FOR the purpose of establishing that a person who in good faith discloses information about  
6 allegations of sexually assaultive behavior may not be held liable for the disclosure;  
7 requiring a court to award attorney’s fees and costs in certain circumstances; and  
8 generally relating to immunity from liability for disclosure of allegations of sexually  
9 assaultive behavior.

10 BY adding to  
11 Article – Courts and Judicial Proceedings  
12 Section 5–809  
13 Annotated Code of Maryland  
14 (2020 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

15 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
16 Article – Courts and Judicial Proceedings  
17 Section 10–923(a)  
18 Annotated Code of Maryland  
19 (2020 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

22 **Article – Courts and Judicial Proceedings**

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 **5-809.**

2 (A) IN THIS SECTION, "SEXUALLY ASSAULTIVE BEHAVIOR" HAS THE  
3 MEANING STATED IN § 10-923 OF THIS ARTICLE.

4 (B) A PERSON ACTING IN GOOD FAITH MAY NOT BE HELD LIABLE FOR  
5 DISCLOSING ANY INFORMATION ABOUT ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUALLY ASSAULTIVE  
6 BEHAVIOR TO ANOTHER PERSON.

7 (C) A PERSON WHO DISCLOSES INFORMATION UNDER SUBSECTION (B) OF  
8 THIS SECTION SHALL BE PRESUMED TO HAVE ACTED IN GOOD FAITH UNLESS IT IS  
9 SHOWN BY A PREPONDERANCE OF THE EVIDENCE THAT THE PERSON:

10 (1) ACTED WITH ACTUAL MALICE TOWARD THE PERSON ALLEGED TO  
11 HAVE COMMITTED SEXUALLY ASSAULTIVE BEHAVIOR; OR

12 (2) INTENTIONALLY OR RECKLESSLY DISCLOSED FALSE  
13 INFORMATION ABOUT THE PERSON ALLEGED TO HAVE COMMITTED SEXUALLY  
14 ASSAULTIVE BEHAVIOR.

15 (D) THE COURT SHALL AWARD REASONABLE ATTORNEY'S FEES AND COSTS  
16 TO A PERSON WHO SUCCESSFULLY DEFENDS A CLAIM THAT THE PERSON DID NOT  
17 ACT IN GOOD FAITH IN DISCLOSING INFORMATION ABOUT ALLEGATIONS OF  
18 SEXUALLY ASSAULTIVE BEHAVIOR, UNLESS THE PARTY FROM WHOM THE FEES AND  
19 COSTS ARE SOUGHT ESTABLISHES THAT THE AWARD WOULD BE CLEARLY  
20 INAPPROPRIATE.

21 10-923.

22 (a) In this section, "sexually assaultive behavior" means an act that would  
23 constitute:

24 (1) A sexual crime under Title 3, Subtitle 3 of the Criminal Law Article;

25 (2) Sexual abuse of a minor under § 3-602 of the Criminal Law Article;

26 (3) Sexual abuse of a vulnerable adult under § 3-604 of the Criminal Law  
27 Article;

28 (4) A violation of 18 U.S.C. Chapter 109A; or

29 (5) A violation of a law of another state, the United States, or a foreign  
30 country that is equivalent to an offense under item (1), (2), (3), or (4) of this subsection.

1           SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
2   October 1, 2026.