

HOUSE BILL 491

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By: Delegate Phillips

Introduced and read first time: January 27, 2026

Assigned to: Judiciary

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Criminal Procedure – Victims of Sexually Assaultive Behavior – Request for**
3 **Verbal Acknowledgement**

4 FOR the purpose of prohibiting a law enforcement agency from making a certain request
5 for verbal acknowledgement in an interaction with a certain victim; and generally
6 relating to victims of sexually assaultive behavior.

7 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
8 Article – Criminal Procedure
9 Section 11–929
10 Annotated Code of Maryland
11 (2025 Replacement Volume)

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

14 **Article – Criminal Procedure**

15 11–929.

16 (a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

17 (2) “Law enforcement agency” has the meaning stated in § 3–201(d) of the
18 Public Safety Article.

19 (3) “Sexually assaultive behavior” has the meaning stated in § 10–923 of
20 the Courts Article.

21 (4) “Victim” means any person suspected to have been subjected to sexually
22 assaultive behavior or who claims to have been subjected to sexually assaultive behavior.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



4 (1) relieve the law enforcement agency of an obligation to the victim;

5 (2) preclude or define the scope of an investigation by the law enforcement
6 agency into an act allegedly committed against the victim;

7 (3) prevent or limit a prosecution of an act allegedly committed against the
8 victim; or

(4) limit a private right of action of the victim pertaining to an act allegedly committed against the victim or the victim's interaction with the law enforcement agency.

11 (c) If a victim requests that the scope of an investigation be limited or that an
12 investigation be temporarily or permanently suspended, the law enforcement agency shall:

13 (1) thoroughly document the request; and

14 (2) follow up with the victim in accordance with practices recommended by
15 the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission.

16 (d) If a law enforcement agency violates this section, an affected victim may bring
17 an action seeking injunctive or declaratory relief.

18 (e) (1) On or before January 1, 2021, each law enforcement agency in the State
19 shall adopt a policy to enforce the provisions of this section.

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