

WOODLAWN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC.
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January 25, 2020

Judiciary Committee
House Office Building
6 Bladen St.
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Support of HB233/SB212, Criminal Law - Assault in the First Degree - Suffocation or Strangulation

Dear Judiciary Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the Woodlawn Community Association, Inc. (WCA) in support of passage of HB233/SB212. WCA represents nearly 900 households in Prince George's County. This issue is critical to our community because a number of our residents have been, directly or indirectly, victims of domestic violence, including strangulation or attempted strangulation (that has led to significant health consequences, both physical and psychological).

Domestic violence that includes squeezing the victim's throat is not unique to our area; it is typical everywhere. Recognition of its seriousness has spread across the country, resulting in criminal laws specific to strangulation in all but three (3) states and the District of Columbia. Prince George's County should join other jurisdictions that recognize and criminally penalize this deadly and insidious type of assault.

WCA applauds the efforts and commitment of the Prince George's County State Attorney to enhance protections for strangulation victims and consider strangulation as a first-degree assault. This legislation would enable prosecutors to charge more strangulation cases as felonies and save more lives. We urge you to immediately pass HB233/SB212.

Respectfully,



LuEllen Conti, Vice President/Executive Board

On behalf of the Woodlawn Community Association, Inc.