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**BILL NO.:**           **HB 233**

**TITLE:**             Criminal Law - Assault in the First Degree - Suffocation or Strangulation

**SPONSOR:**         Delegate Pippy

**COMMITTEE:**      Judiciary

**POSITION:**       **SUPPORT**

**DATE:**             January 28, 2020

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** House Bill 233 – Criminal Law - Assault in the First Degree - Suffocation or Strangulation. This bill makes the intentional suffocating or strangling of another in the commission of an assault a felony punishable by up to 25 years imprisonment.

Woman are far more likely to be victims of strangulation than men, and women who have been strangled one time by their partner are 750% more likely to be killed by that partner. According to a 2008 study in the Journal of Emergency Medicine, 43% of women murdered by their partner had been strangled by that partner in the year prior. Strangulation cases can be difficult to prosecute, however, as physical evidence of strangulation can be difficult to see.

Yet the effects of the strangulation are quite evident. Brain injury, emotional trauma, and signs of future abuse may go by unchecked so long as the perpetration of this crime is not treated with the urgency that it warrants. This is not simply an issue of semantics, women are suffering as a result of strangulation, and it is past time for Maryland to join the fight against this abuse.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 233. For more information, please contact Chuck Conner, Chief Legislative Officer, at 443-900-6582.