



Maryland Chiefs of Police Association

Maryland Sheriffs' Association



MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Luke Clippinger, Chairman and
Members of the Judiciary Committee

FROM: Chief David Morris, Co-Chair, MCPA, Joint Legislative Committee
Sheriff Darren Popkin, Co-Chair, MSA, Joint Legislative Committee
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

DATE: January 28, 2020

RE: **HB 233 – Criminal Law – Assault in the First Degree – Suffocation or
Strangulation**

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) SUPPORT HB 233. This bill would make strangulation or suffocation during an assault a first-degree felony.

Women who are victims of domestic violence are often strangled by their partners. Studies have shown that if a woman is strangled one time by her partner, she is 750% more likely to later be killed by that same partner. Treating strangulation and suffocation as a misdemeanor does nothing to deter a partner from taking similar actions again. Maryland should join the 47 other states that already classify strangulation and suffocation as felonies.

HB 233 will increase safety and save the lives of domestic violence victims across the state. For these reasons, MCPA and MSA SUPPORT HB 233 and urge a FAVORABLE Committee report.