



Working to end sexual violence in Maryland

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Testimony Regarding House Bill 323
Lisae C. Jordan, Executive Director & Counsel
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The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MCASA) is a non-profit membership organization that includes the State's seventeen rape crisis centers, law enforcement, mental health and health care providers, attorneys, educators, survivors of sexual violence and other concerned individuals. MCASA includes the Sexual Assault Legal Institute (SALI), a statewide legal services provider for survivors of sexual assault. MCASA represents the unified voice and combined energy of all of its members working to eliminate sexual violence. We urge the Judiciary Committee to amend House Bill 323 to ensure greater victim participation.

House Bill 323

Crime Victim Participation in Proceedings Regarding Sentence Reduction

House Bill 323 creates a process for reduction of sentences after a convicted defendant has served a significant portion of a sentence. MCASA appreciates the provisions requiring notice to a victim and the opportunity to be heard. We note, however, that it could inflict significant trauma on a rape victim to participate in person and, conversely, if a victim does not object to the reduction, it is onerous to require personal appearance. We therefore urge the Committee to permit a victim to submit victim impact statement and to require the Court to consider the statement.

On page 3, line 24, after "RULE 4-345" insert: "OR SUBMIT A VICTIM IMPACT STATEMENT" and

On page 4, line 11, after "REDUCE THE SENTENCE" insert "AND CONSIDERS ANY VICTIM IMPACT STATEMENT FILED IN THE CASE AT THE TIME OF SENTENCING OR UNDER SUBSECTION (C)"

**The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault urges the
Judiciary Committee to Amend House Bill 323**