



Maryland State Board of Victim Services

100 Community Place, Crownsville, MD 21032

Steven J. Kelly, Esq.
Chair

February 4, 2020

Chair Luke H. Clippinger, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee
Room 101, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HOUSE BILL 358 – Victim’s Rights – Restitution
POSITION: SUPPORT

Dear Chair Clippinger and Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

The Maryland State Board of Victim Services supports House Bill 358, which requires courts to order victim restitution in criminal cases, where previously courts had discretion to enter an order of restitution. Under current law, victims are entitled to request restitution from an offender if a victim has suffered any financial loss as a direct result of the crime. House Bill 358 clarifies that victims may request restitution for any financial result of the crime or delinquent act, not just a direct result of the crime, and still affording the offender the right to argue the ability to pay.

House Bill 358 also requires the victim or the State to present the court with evidence to support the request for restitution, in addition to requiring the State’s Attorney to advise the victim of the steps a court must take to award restitution, the evidence required, and the process for collecting restitution that is awarded. This language allows victims to be better informed of their rights during the criminal justice process.

House Bill 358 aligns with the mission of the Maryland State Board of Victim Services which is to ensure that all crime victims in the State of Maryland receive justice, and supports an ongoing Board priority of upholding the rights of victims.

For these reasons, the Maryland State Board of Victim Services urges a favorable report on House Bill 358.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'SJK', followed by a horizontal line.

Steven J. Kelly, Esq.
Chair