



Working to end sexual violence in Maryland

P.O. Box 8782
Silver Spring, MD 20907
Phone: 301-565-2277
Fax: 301-565-3619

For more information contact:
Lisae C. Jordan, Esquire
443-995-5544
www.mcasa.org

Testimony Support House Bill 462
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 in the State of Maryland. We urge the Health & Government Operations Committee to report favorably on House Bill 462.

House Bill 462 – Residential Rehabilitation Programs – Critical Incidents

House Bill 462 establishes reporting and assessment after a critical incident at a residential rehabilitation program. "Critical incident" includes both non-consensual sexual activity, and "any sexual activity between a staff member of a residential rehabilitation program and a program participant."

People with disabilities, including people in residential rehabilitation programs, are at a higher risk for sexual assault compared with nondisabled people.¹ Many sexual assaults go unreported. A victim may not report a sexual assault include personal beliefs, fear, embarrassment, mistrust of the justice system, power imbalances between patients and staff, or an inability to report due to a physical or cognitive disability. House Bill 462 helps create appropriate responses to sexual violence.

**The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault urges the
Health & Government Operations to report
favorably on House Bill 462**

1) National Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Domestic violence and disabilities. 2012.

http://www.incasa.org/PDF/2012/Domestic_Violence_and_Disabilities.pdf