

Mid Atlantic P.A.N.D.A. Coalition

5900 Abriana Way, Elkridge, Maryland 21075

Written Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 134
Civil Actions-Child Sexual Abuse-Definition and Statute of Limitations
SUPPORT

To: Hon. William C. Smith, Jr. Chair, and members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

From: Mid Atlantic P.A.N.D.A. Coalition

Date: January 19, 2021

Dear Senator Smith

The Mid-Atlantic P.A.N.D.A. is in Favor of SB 134

We represent the Mid Atlantic P.A.N.D.A. Coalition (Prevent Abuse and Neglect through Dental Awareness). We were established in 2000, our mission is "To create an atmosphere of understanding in dentistry and other professional communities which will result in the prevention of abuse and neglect through early identification and appropriate intervention for those who have been abused or neglected." Dentists and Dental Hygienists (Dental Professionals) are mandated by the State of Maryland to report suspected cases of abuse and neglect. Our coalition has established a Continuing Education (CE) course that educates Dental Professionals and other how to recognize, report, or refer. The Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners has deemed this course as a mandatory CE requirement for Dentists and Hygienists to renew their licenses. We also address domestic violence, elder abuse, bullying and human trafficking in our CE course.

SB 134 will extend the time in which one can file sexual abuse claims. This added time would allow these victims that have been intimidated and afraid to report their sexual abuse the time to process what has happened to them. They also may not be aware of how to report. Developing the proper mechanisms to be able to stand up for themselves and seek help takes time. By extending this time period it will help these victims to be able to improve their self-esteem. This will result in helping one to heal.

We thank you for your consideration of SB 134 and we ask you vote favorable.

Respectfully submitted,

The Mid-Atlantic P.A.N.D.A. Coalition
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