



Bill No: SB505  
Title: Criminal Law – First Degree Child Abuse – Continuing Course of Conduct  
Committee: Judicial Proceedings  
Hearing: February 11, 2021  
Position: SUPPORT

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The Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women (MLAW) is a statewide coalition of women’s groups and individuals formed to provide a non-partisan, independent voice for Maryland women and families. MLAW’s purpose is to advocate for legislation affecting women and families. To accomplish this goal, MLAW creates an annual legislative agenda with issues voted on by MLAW members and endorsed by organizations and individuals from all over Maryland. **SB505 a priority on the [2021 MLAW Agenda](#) and we urge your support.**

SB505 would make a continuing course of child abuse part of the first degree child abuse statute, it makes the continued course of action a crime of violence providing stiffer penalties that will better protect women and families.

Currently first degree child abuse requires death of the child or a serious physical injury which is defined as a brain injury, bleeding within the skull, substantial risk of death, disfigurement or the loss or impairment of a bodily organ. First degree child abuse does not cover children with numerous healing fractures, repeated abuse, some burns or other injuries often diagnosed by medical professionals as torture. Instead these repeated injuries can only be covered by 2nd child abuse which is not a crime of violence, maxes out at ten years which only requires a perpetrator to serve 1/4 of their sentence before they're eligible for parole. This puts a continued course of child abuse on par with misdemeanor second degree assault and does not provide the same needed protections to women and families.

**For these reasons, MLAW strongly urges the passage of SB505.**

MLAW's 2021 Agenda is supported by the following organizations:

AAUW Anne Arundel County  
AAUW Easton Branch  
AAUW Kensington Rockville Branch  
American Association of University Women (AAUW) Maryland  
Anne Arundel County NOW  
Baltimore NOW (National Organization for Women)  
Bound for Better, Advocates for Domestic Violence Survivors  
Business and Professional Women Maryland  
Calvert County Commission for Women  
Cambridge Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.  
Charles County Commission for Women  
Childway Early Learning Center  
Church Women United  
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Annapolis Alumnae Chapter  
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Kappa Phi Chapter  
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Baltimore County Alumnae Chapter  
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Baltimore Metropolitan Alumnae Chapter  
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Fort Washington Alumnae Chapter  
Delta Sigma Theta Inc., Frederick County Alumnae Chapter  
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Harford County Alumnae Chapter  
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Kappa Psi Chapter  
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Montgomery County MD Alumnae Chapter  
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., North Arundel County Alumnae Chapter  
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Potomac Valley Alumnae Chapter  
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Prince George's County Alumnae Chapter  
For All Seasons, Inc.  
Hug Don't Shoot  
Human Trafficking Prevention Project, University of Baltimore School of Law  
League of Women Voters of Prince George's County (LWVPGC)  
Lee Law, LLC  
Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault  
Maryland Family Network  
Maryland Justice Project  
Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence  
Maryland NOW  
Maryland Women's Heritage Center  
Mission 50  
MoCoWoMen  
Montgomery County Commission for Women  
Montgomery County NOW (National Organization for *Women*)  
Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club  
Montgomery County Young Democrats  
NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland  
National Coalition of 100 Black Women., Inc. Anne Arundel County Chapter  
National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Prince George's County Chapter  
Planned Parenthood of Maryland  
Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan Washington DC  
Prince George's County Drug Policy Coalition, Inc.  
Reproductive Justice Inside  
Stella's Girls Inc.  
The Rest Of A Life (TROAL)  
Top Ladies of Distinction  
Top Ladies of Distinction, Inc., Patuxent River Chapter  
Top Ladies of Distinction, Prince George's County Chapter  
UAW Local 1183  
WISE  
Women's Equality Day 2020 Celebration Coalition  
Women's Law Center of Maryland