



**Working to end sexual violence in Maryland**

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**Testimony Supporting Senate Bill 429**  
**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 Judicial Proceedings Committee to report favorably on Senate Bill 429.

**Senate Bill 429 – Stalking**

**Increased Penalties for Serial Stalking or Stalking in Violation of a Protective Order**

Senate Bill 429 would increase the penalties for stalkers convicted of stalking or who commit stalking in while a protective order for the same victim was in place.

Stalking of the victim by the offender is a frequent precursor of the sexual assault.

Roger, Laura, *Many Sexual Assaults Follow Stalking*, United States Department of Justice Archives (webpage), January 12, 2021. <https://www.justice.gov/archives/ovw/blog/many-sexual-assaults-follow-stalking>

Stalking is also common. About 1 in 6 women and 1 in 17 men have experienced stalking in their lifetimes. Stalking is quite serious and impacts the physical and mental health of victims. Research shows stalking can lead to depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. About 68% of female and 70% of male victims experienced threats of physical harm during their lifetime.

<https://www.cdc.gov/injury/features/prevent-stalking/index.html>.

Stalkers who are stalking in violation of a protective order or who have committed stalking in the past are clearly dangerous. Permitting courts to impose a longer sentence in these cases recognizes the danger they pose and can help prevent future violence.

**The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault urges the  
Judicial Proceedings Committee to  
report favorably on Senate Bill 429**