



Working to end sexual violence in Maryland

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Testimony Supporting House Bill 948 with Amendments
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. MCASA urges a favorable report on House Bill 948 with Amendments.

House Bill 948 – Registered Sex Offenders and Informal Child Care

This bill prevents registered sex offenders from providing informal child care. This is a reasonable restriction and will help protect children. Registered sex offenders have been criminally convicted of sex offenses.

HB948 would allow registered sex offenders to provide informal child care if they advise a parent or guardian that they are required to register and the parent or guardian provides written permission to provide care. MCASA respectfully opposes these provisions. These provisions rely upon the sex offender to notify the parent or guardian about the prior conviction for a sex crime. Offenders may misrepresent and minimize what happened. It is far too common for sex offenders to represent that they committed statutory rape and it was all a “misunderstanding”, distorting facts of the offense and the nature of rape. Additionally, most parents and guardians lack the ability to assess the complicated risk factors that sex offenders present, see, for example: <https://smart.ojp.gov/somapi/chapter-3-sex-offender-typologies>. MCASA requests that HB948 be amended by striking page 2, lines 26-33.

**The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault urges the
Judiciary Committee to
report favorably on House Bill 948 with Amendments**