MCASA
Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault

Working to end sexual violence in Maryland

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Testimony Supporting House Bill 471
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 Judiciary Committee to report favorably on House Bill 471.

House Bill 471 – Indecent Exposure with Lascivious or Prurient Intent – Victim Under 14
This bill specifies that when the crime of indecent exposure is committed with lascivious or prurient intent and involves display of genitals, offenders will be placed on the sex offender registry if the victim is under the age of 14 and the offender is at least four years older than the victim.

MCASA appreciates the sponsor's decision to lower application of this law to younger children and to include an age gap. This approach helps ensure that only sex offenders are on the sex offender registry. Without these provisions, the bill would be overly broad and could capture sex workers, young people flashing breasts, and others whose conduct may involve exposure but are not sex offenders. HB471 will also, however, strikes a balance and would address serious crimes against children. Indecent exposure to a young child is often a step in grooming the child for further abuse and can be traumatizing in and of itself.

The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault urges the
Judiciary Committee to
report favorably on House Bill 471