



ANTHONY B. COVINGTON

State's Attorney for Charles County

January 25, 2022

Maryland House Judiciary Committee
Luke Clippinger, *Chair*
House Office Building, Room 101
Annapolis, MD 21401 – 1991

Re: Favorable Report for House Bill 083; Emancipation of a Minor and Authorization to Marry

Dear Chairman Clippinger and Members of the Committee:

As a career special victims' prosecutor I urge a favorable report on this bill.

Girls who marry prior to turning 18 are significantly more likely to experience intimate partner violence than girls who marry after the age of 18. Studies have also shown that girls who marry before the age of 18 are also more likely to experience greater educational and financial gaps than young women who marry after they turn 18. These gaps leads to larger disparities in the power and control dynamics of intimate partner violence and impacts the ability of a survivor to leave the abusive relationship.

Intimate partner violence impacts every single member of our community, not just through physical and mental harm but also economic harm. According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, victims of intimate partner violence lose a total of 8 million days of paid work each year. Intimate partner violence results in a combined cost of approximately \$8.3 billion per year in this country.

This bill will help protect our young people, reduce the risk of intimate partner violence and support our community.

Thank you,

K.A. Marsh

Kathryn A. Marsh
Special Victims Liaison,
Assistant State's Attorney

Information related to child marriage taken from Child Marriage and Intimate Partner Violence: A Comparative Study of 34 Countries.
Author: Rachel Kidman
Published: International Journal of Epidemiology, Vol. 46, Issue 2, 4/2/17