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January 27, 2023

Delegate Ben Barnes, Chair
House Appropriations Committee
House Office Building, Room 120
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: HB 186 Victim Services Programs – Supplementing Federal Funding and Support (Victim Services Stabilization Act)

Position: Support

Dear Chair; Vice-Chair and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Psychological Association, (MPA), which represents over 1,000 doctoral level psychologists throughout the state, asks the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee to **FAVORABLY report on HB 186**. HB186 allows for supplemental state funding of victim service programs to provide stable funding of support services for victims of crime.

This bill will provide stabilization of the flow of funding to support victim services to alleged victims of crime. When victims of crimes come to court, they quite often find themselves completely uninformed and unsupported. Often no one is available to tell them what is happening, let alone advocate for them.

As mental/emotional health professionals we can provide alleged victims with tools of psychological recovery, but we cannot advocate and inform them of their right to be heard and to be treated with respect and sensitivity. If passed, this bill would help to secure and significantly improve the chances of victim recovery and prevention of lingering emotional problems such as Post Traumatic Stress by fully supporting them throughout the legal process.

Thank you for considering our comments on HB 186. If we can be of any further assistance as the Senate – Budget and Taxation Committee considers this bill, please do not hesitate to contact MPA's Legislative Chair, Dr. Pat Savage at mpalegislativcommittee@gmail.com.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Resnik, Psy.D.

Rebecca Resnick, Psy.D.
President

R. Patrick Savage, Jr., Ph.D.

R. Patrick Savage, Jr., Ph.D.
Chair, MPA Legislative Committee

cc: Richard Bloch, Esq., Counsel for Maryland Psychological Association
Barbara Brocato & Dan Shattuck, MPA Government Affairs