



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

Lowe House Office Building, 6 Bladen Street, Room 200 · Annapolis, Maryland 21401
Phone 410-841-3374 | 301-858-3374 · 800-492-7122 Ext. 3374 · Fax 410-841-3342 | 301-858-3342
latino.caucus@house.state.md.us · www.mdlatinocaucus.org

DAVID FRASER-HIDALGO, CHAIR
JOSELINE A. PEÑA-MELNYK, VICE-CHAIR
GABRIEL ACEVERO, TREASURER
JESSE T. PIPPY, SECRETARY
MADELIN MARTINEZ, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

TO: Delegate Kumar P. Barve, Chair
Delegate Dana Stein, Vice Chair
Environment and Transportation Committee Members
FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus
DATE: March 20th, 2023
RE: HB1073 Homeowner Assistance Fund – Victims of Domestic Violence – Eligibility

The MLLC supports HB1073 Homeowner Assistance Fund – Victims of Domestic Violence – Eligibility

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation that improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a crucial voice in the development of public policy that uplifts the Latino community and benefits the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB1073.

More than one in three Latina women (34.4%) in the United States reported ever being a victim of an intimate partner's sexual or physical violence or stalking, according to a 2017 CDC report.¹ Reasoning that there is a percentage of women who experience domestic violence but do not report it, the actual percentage of Latina women experiencing domestic violence is much larger. Women in the Latino community live under the fear of domestic violence because of their limited financial and educational means, fear of their immigration status, fear of intimidation, or other cultural/religious pressure.² In a national sample, 41% of Latina mothers involved in child welfare and whose children remained in the home reported experiencing domestic violence in their lifetime, 33% of whom had experienced domestic violence in the last year with 27% reporting severe domestic violence.³ Domestic violence can take many shapes. It can be sexual, physical, psychological, financial or any combination of these.

This bill requires the Department of Housing and Community Development to establish special eligibility requirements under the Maryland Homeowner Assistance Fund for victims of domestic violence. Victims may still meet eligibility requirements despite the fact that the current or former spouse or cohabitant of the victim of domestic violence refuses or is unwilling to participate in a standard application for financial assistance from the Fund. The bill prohibits the Department from issuing financial assistance under the Fund to victims of domestic violence if issuing the financial assistance will result in a reduction or repayment of federal funds authorized under the American Rescue Plan Act.

For these reasons, the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on HB1073.

¹ Merck, A. (2020, April 15). *Addressing the spike in domestic violence amid coronavirus for latinas and all women*. Salud America. <https://salud-america.org/addressing-the-spike-in-domestic-violence-amid-coronavirus-for-latinas-and-all-women/>.

² Esperanza United. (2021). (rep.). *Latinas and Intimate Partner Violence Evidence-Based Facts*. https://esperanzaunited.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/3.11.73-Factsheet_GeneralIPV2021-1.pdf.

³ Ibid.