



BILL NO: Senate Bill 420
TITLE: Human Services – Temporary Cash Assistance – Housing Allowance
COMMITTEE: Finance
HEARING DATE: February 23, 2023
POSITION: **SUPPORT**

The Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV) is the state domestic violence coalition that brings together victim service providers, allied professionals, and concerned individuals for the common purpose of reducing intimate partner and family violence and its harmful effects on our citizens. **MNADV urges the Finance Committee to issue a favorable report on SB 420.**

With more than a third of domestic violence victims experiencing homelessness after leaving their abuser, the ability to access safe and affordable housing is paramount for victims and survivors of domestic violence. An inability to access safe and affordable housing is often an insurmountable barrier for a victim attempting to leave a domestic violence situation. Victims often remain in abusive relationships and children are exposed to ongoing violence because they have nowhere safe to go and are at risk of homelessness or housing instability.

Financial abuse occurs in estimated to occur in 94-99% of domestic violence cases and is used by an abuser as a power and control tactic. The ability to establish financial independence and afford the numerous expenses needed to support themselves and children is a tremendous barrier for victims of domestic violence and also a reason some do not leave their abuser.

SB 420 offers a housing allowance to families with children that already receive Temporary Cash Assistance or Transitional Support Services. SB 420 will allow low-income families to better access housing when needed and better maintain that stability once safely housed. This can assist victims of domestic violence in need of safe and affordable housing to escape violence.

For the above stated reasons, the **Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence urges a favorable report on SB 420.**

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