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March 8, 2023

The Honorable William Smith & Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
Chairperson, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
11 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Favorable Report for Senate Bill 129; Repeal of Spousal Defense

Dear Chairperson Smith and JPR Committee Members:

A marriage license is not a bill of sale, a deed, or any other document that indicates ownership over a spouse. One spouse does not lose their autonomy over their own body merely because they're married. Maryland's spousal defense, however, seems to indicate otherwise and grants one spouse the ability to sexually assault their spouse without legal repercussions. No other relationship in Maryland is afforded the right to sexually assault a loved one without legal repercussions, not a parent, a boyfriend, a girlfriend, nor any other family member.

The spousal defense harkens back to a past where a wife was deemed property and should not exist in the Maryland of today. I urge a favorable return of this bill.

Sincerely,

*Rebecca Cordero*

Rebecca Cordero  
Senior Assistant State's Attorney  
Calvert County State's Attorney's Office