



BILL NO: Senate Bill 256
TITLE: Public Safety - Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission – Revisions
COMMITTEE: Judicial Proceedings
HEARING DATE: February 6, 2024
POSITION: **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

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 Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee to issue a favorable report with amendments on SB 256.**

Senate Bill 256 requires entrance level training and additional trainings every three years on laws and services for victims of rape and sexual offenses, human trafficking, and generally contact and treatment of victims and services available to them. The bill also includes training conducted on use of force, de-escalation and the recognition and prevention of discrimination. MNADV supports these training efforts.

In a 2015 survey, 88% of victims of domestic violence or sexual assault reported that police “sometimes” or “often” do not believe victims or blamed victims for the violence.¹ In that same survey, 83% of the those surveyed thought police “sometimes” or “often” do not take allegations of sexual assault and domestic violence seriously.² Over 80% believed that police-community relations with marginalized communities influenced survivors’ willingness to call the police.³

MNADV would request that the bill be amended to include the following language on page 9 after line 5, “THE CRIMINAL LAWS CONCERNING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, INCLUDING SERVICES AND SUPPORT AVAILABLE TO VICTIMS AND THE RIGHTS OF AND APPROPRIATE TREATMENT OF VICTIMS.”

For the above stated reasons, the **Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence urges a favorable report with amendments on SB 256.**

¹ ACLU, [Responses from the Field: Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, and Policing](#), 2015.

² *Id.*

³ *Id.*



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