



Working to end sexual violence in Maryland

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Testimony Supporting House Bill 37
Lisae C. Jordan, Executive Director & Counsel
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The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MCASA) is a non-profit membership organization that includes the State's seventeen rape crisis centers, law enforcement, mental health and health care providers, attorneys, educators, survivors of sexual violence and other concerned individuals. MCASA includes the Sexual Assault Legal Institute (SALI), a statewide legal services provider for survivors of sexual assault. MCASA represents the unified voice and combined energy of all of its members working to eliminate sexual violence. We urge the Judicial Proceedings Committee to report favorably on House Bill 37.

House Bill 37 – Correctional Services – Services for Formerly Incarcerated Women

This bill would create a Commission on Services for Formerly Incarcerated Women overseen by the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention & Policy to create a comprehensive reentry plan for formerly incarcerated women, and establish the Reentry Pilot Program for Formerly Incarcerated Women to connect formerly incarcerated women to supportive services.

Over 85 percent of incarcerated women have experienced sexual violence in their lifetimes,¹ and abuse is too often repeated behind prison walls. Women in prison are disproportionately women of color, and the vast majority are economically marginalized. If Maryland is serious about responding to sexual violence and helping survivors heal, it is critical that formerly incarcerated women have the support and services they need to successfully reenter our communities.

**The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault urges the
Judicial Proceedings Committee to
report favorably on House Bill 37**

¹ Women's pathways to jail: The roles & intersections of serious mental illness & trauma, Shannon M. Lynch, Ph.D., Dana D. DeHart, Ph.D., Joanne Belknap, Ph.D., Bonnie L. Green, Ph.D. Georgetown University, submitted to the US Dept of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2012.