



BILL NO: Senate Bill 379
TITLE: Task Force to Study Crime Classification - Renaming, Membership, and Duties
COMMITTEE: Judiciary
HEARING DATE: March 28, 2024
POSITION: **Favorable**

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 House Judiciary Committee to issue a favorable report on SB 379.**

Senate Bill 379 would rename the existing Task Force to Study Crime Classification and Penalties, expand the membership, and redefine the focus of the Task Force. The Task Force's obligations would include the review of the penalties for all criminal and civil violations in the Criminal Law Article, Criminal Procedure Article, Public Safety Article, and Maryland Sentencing Guidelines and make recommendations regarding the current scheme for criminal and civil violations in the Criminal Law Article, Criminal Procedure Article, Public Safety Article, and Maryland Sentencing Guidelines.

MNADV was honored to participate in the Task Force to Study Crime Classification and agreed with the recommendations of the Task Force. Those recommendations comprise what is SB 379. MNADV supports the continuation of the Task Force and the clarification and modification of its responsibilities. We support the passage of SB 379 and hope to continue the work commenced by the Task Force in 2023.

MNADV believes that it is imperative that any group or Task Force working and studying crime classification and penalties include representation from the communities directly impacted by those crimes. MNADV is the federally recognized state domestic violence coalition and represents the nineteen comprehensive domestic violence programs in Maryland. Together these programs provide emergency shelter, 24-hour hotlines, counseling, advocacy and legal services to victims and survivors of domestic violence as well as abuse intervention services to those who have committed violence. The programs we represent offer services to those that are victims of domestic violence, those who have committed domestic violence, and victims that are criminalized. It is crucial that these voices are at the table during a study of crime classifications and penalties.

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For the above stated reasons, the **Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence** urges a **favorable report on SB 379**.

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