BILL NO: House Bill 1062
TITLE: Criminal Law - Harassment - Digitally Altered or Generated Visual
Representations
COMMITTEE: Judiciary
HEARING DATE: February 20, 2024
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 House Judiciary Committee to issue a favorable report on HB 1062.**

House Bill 1062 clarifies and provides a definition for what is a "visual representation" in the context of revenge porn. Revenge porn is one of many abusive tactics of power and control present in domestic violence. In one study 71% of victims report that a current or previous romantic partner had posted a nude image.[1]

Revenge porn can be used to threaten a victim, for retaliation, or to simply cause a victim harm. A victim can be coerced into creating an image, the image could have been taken without their consent, or an image could be consensual only for it to be subsequently used to victimize by its distribution without their consent. A victim of revenge porn can experience trauma and psychological harm in addition to economic harm due to the unlawful sharing of images.

The clarifying definition for "visual representation" in HB 1062 reflects the evolving nature of technology and how victims can be harmed.

For the above stated reasons, the **Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence urges a favorable report on HB 1062.**

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[1] https://www.strangulationtraininginstitute.com/revenge-porn-the-latest-research-and-law-enforcement-efforts/

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