



Working to end sexual violence in Maryland

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Testimony Supporting Senate Bill 111 with Conforming Amendments
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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 Judiciary Committee to report favorably on Senate Bill 111 with conforming amendments.

Senate Bill 111 – Protection of Identity of Minor Victim

This bill would require that identifying information regarding a minor may not be disclosed or inspected, including in charging documents or other filings in a criminal or juvenile delinquency case. Additionally, the bill would permit identification of the minor if there is clear and convincing evidence of good cause to order otherwise. Amendments to the House crossfile, HB458, require that the Court receive notice that a case involves a minor victim. These were added at the request of the Judiciary and are reasonable provisions regarding the logistics of the law's application.

MCASA strongly supports SB111 as an important tool for protecting the privacy of children and teens who are victims of sex crimes. Privacy is extremely important to the majority of sex crimes survivors. The rise of electronic filing and easily accessible court documents makes it all too easy for others to learn the identity of survivors. For children (and others) this can lead to embarrassment, taunting, discrimination, and emotional harm. Disclosure of a child victim's identity could also discourage survivors and families from coming forward to prosecute sex offenders.

**The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault urges the
Judicial Proceedings Committee to
report favorably on Senate Bill 111 with Conforming Amendments**