



TESTIMONY FOR HB0656
Family Law - Victims of Domestic Violence Program
Certification and Grant Fund

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Ivey

Committee: Judiciary

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Aileen Alex, co-chair

Position: **FAVORABLE**

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0656 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of individuals and grassroots groups with members in every district in the state with well over 30,000 members.

MLC backs strengthening the Maryland Domestic Violence Program. This bill would provide for consistent and non-lapsing grants totaling \$5 million annually for more certified shelters and support services for victims of domestic violence.

Domestic violence is a grave issue that can have devastating consequences for victims, their families, and communities. Victims suffer physical and emotional harm. Even if children themselves are not abused, witnessing domestic violence can be harmful. In addition, communities suffer from lost work productivity due to absenteeism caused by domestic violence.

Maryland needs to do more to support victims of domestic violence through consistent and approved programs that remove people from these harmful situations.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.